

Sara M Vallitté

The Inner Chamber

The Inner Chamber

A Manual of Devotion

BY THE

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INTRODUCTION

There are multitudes of people today seeking a religion that can be applied to all the situations and problems of life. They are convinced that Christianity could do so if re-interpreted in the light of modern knowledge and expressed in modern language.

An attempt was made to meet this need in a series of short studies or meditations which appeared in the monthly magazine, *APPLIED RELIGION*. They have been revised and added to, and are now published in book-form at the request of many readers of the magazine.

No subjects of controversy between the various Christian Churches have been treated. Stress is laid on a few fundamental truths of spiritual religion which are purposely repeated over and over again. The book is in no sense a theological treatise. It is intended to be a devotional manual for all men and women seeking an interpretation of the Christian Religion that is both intellectually tenable and practically efficient.

It is the author's hope that through its reading many will be inclined to establish an "Inner Chamber," and that they will find this book helpful in the time devoted to study and meditation.

Franklyn Cole Sherman.

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Matthew 6 : 6

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into
thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door,
pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy
Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.

*O world, thou chooseth not the better part!
It is not wisdom to be only wise,
And on the inward vision close the eyes,
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
Columbus found a world, and had no chart,
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies;
To trust the soul's invincible surmise
Was all his science and his only art.
Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine
That lights the pathway but one step ahead
Across a void of mystery and dread.
Bid, then, the tender light of faith to shine
By which alone the mortal heart is led
Unto the thinking of the thought divine.*

SANTAYANA

THE INNER CHAMBER

"The Inner Chamber" of which our Lord spoke may be established anywhere. It may be in some room of the house set apart for the purpose. It may be in the silence of an empty Church building. It may be at the trysting-place where we receive the elements of the Holy Communion. It may be in the solitudes of Nature, on the mountain-side or in the forest or beside the ocean waves. Wherever we are able to center our thought upon the spiritual and the eternal, there may be our "Inner Chamber".

We may enter it at any time, though preferably in the morning and just before retiring at night—any time that we can be free from distractions and interruptions. How much time will be given to it is a question for each one to decide. It may be declared, however, that if we are in earnest in our desire for God, we shall, in some way, even in the busiest life, find adequate time to be alone with Him.

Above all, "The Inner Chamber" is a place and time for fellowship. It is here that we learn how "to practice the presence of God". We enter it, not in the spirit of one demanding gifts from a rich friend, but, rather, as one who rejoices to be in the companionship of One whom he loves and who loves him with all the capacity of His infinite nature.

It is a place for meditation and deep thought. It is here that we do our clearest thinking about God, His infinite perfections, His relation to us and all the world, His plans for the Kingdom of love to be set up on earth, who and what we are and what we are to become, and all the other great subjects of religion that claim our attention.

THE INNER CHAMBER

It is a place for work but of a different kind than engages us outside. It is here that we use definite spiritual methods to help some one in need and to advance God's work in the world. By our experience we gain the conviction that when we are conscious of God, we become the instrument, the medium, through which God heals and restores those whom we have in mind. This kind of work is not to be entered upon lightly. It is a strenuous work, requiring all that is in us, demanding the exercise of our highest capacities, but it is the noblest and most effective work that we can do for our fellow-men.

"The Inner Chamber" is not a refuge from the conflicts of the world. It is a place where we renew our strength, where we burnish our armor, where we confirm our faith in spiritual things, where we get fresh glimpses of truth, where we are in direct and immediate contact with that Creative Life which stimulates and vitalizes us in every part of our personality that we may be healthful, happy, and effective co-workers with Him in His vast enterprises.

"The Inner Chamber" is a privilege of priceless worth to him who learns how to use it. There never has been a master of the spiritual life who has not urged its employ. It is as necessary to the higher life of the spirit as food and exercise and sleep are to the physical life. There is positively no way for one to be a Christian after the manner of Jesus Christ if he does not establish and frequent daily an "Inner Chamber" devoted to the worship and service of God.

Thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.
Matt. 6:18.

THE MOTIVE

Why should we establish an "Inner Chamber," and why should we, in our already crowded lives, find time every day to frequent it?

Our first reply will probably be: "I want to make my religion practical in every-day life; I need what I have come to believe can be supplied only by religion; I desire freedom from sin of both mind and body; I need happiness and health; and I begin to see that a practical religion demands an 'Inner Chamber' of silence, meditation, and prayer."

But let us at the start realize how much self there is in that attitude. We are thinking about ourselves exclusively, our needs, our desires, our problems. We are proposing to use God for our purposes, to make Him the means to our ends! What conception of God can we be entertaining when our motives are so self-centered? We must see that a selfish religion is both un-Christian and impotent.

Perhaps we revise our answer and say: "I want to be helpful to others, and I need an 'Inner Chamber' of preparation for human service. There is so much evil and suffering in the world, and I wish now to do my part in redeeming the sinful and healing the sick and in making this world a brighter, cleaner, happier, and nobler place to live in."

But where does God come in? See how that answer, seemingly so altruistic, leaves Him out altogether and leads us to use Him as a divine means for a human end! And God cannot be so used! He must be valued and sought for no other end than Himself.

We must learn at once that "The Inner Chamber," as Jesus conceived it, is primarily a place of intimate

THE MOTIVE

fellowship with God, the Creator and Lover of souls. It is not a place where we go to get things by the use of spiritual power; it is a trysting place where we meet God face to face and exult in His friendship and delight in His presence.

We would not degrade a friendship by thinking of our friend all the time as one from whom we can obtain rich gifts. We value the friendship for its own sake, because we find deep satisfaction in the companionship. That the friendship means valued compensations, we know; that our friend will respond to our appeal in hours of need, we know; but the motive of the friendship is our love for our friend and our delight in being with him. And religion must not be degraded below that level!

From the beginning of our use of "The Inner Chamber" we must learn the meaning of the phrase, "Out of self into God!" We are not to go there to talk about ourselves, our desires and our needs, but to have devoted contact with God, to know and love Him to the utmost.

When we love God for His own sake, for what He is in Himself, when we frequent "The Inner Chamber" just to be in His presence, then will our religion become eminently practical, then will we find in it the secret of a life of poise and serenity, strength and happiness and health.

Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Matt. 6:9.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

I Tim. 1:17.

III

GOD

The realization of God as our life will kindle our whole being. It will make us "new creatures," living in a new world. Ruskin reported this incident: "I had a hot march" (to Blonay in Switzerland) "among the vines, and between their dead stone walls once or twice I flagged a little, and began to think it tiresome; then I put my mind into the scene, instead of suffering the body only to make report of it; and looked at it with the possession-taking grasp of the imagination—the true one; it gilded all the dead walls, and I felt the charm in every vine and tendril that hung over them. It required an effort to maintain the feeling: it was poetry while it lasted, and I felt that it was only while under it that one could draw, or invent, or give glory to any part of such a landscape. I repeated 'I am in Switzerland', over and over again, till the name brought back the true group of associations and I felt I had a soul, like my boy's soul once again. I have not insisted enough on this source of all contemplative art. The whole scene without it was but sticks and stones and steep, dusty road."

Is not the same thing true of us on our "hot march" through life? Every day is full of its trifling details, its tiresome work, and its benumbing monotony. It is easy to take God for granted and then to forget Him. But when we repeat over and over, "I live and move and have my being in God, not in time nor space, not in the physical nor the psychical, but in God," we see that every common scene takes on a new glory, every common task a new grandeur.

It will not be strange if we have to recast our conception of God. "When I was a child, I spake as a child,

GOD

I felt as a child, I thought as a child: but now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things" (I Cor. 13:11), and among them my childish thoughts of God. When we were children we tried to picture God as we conceived of Him in a very human and material way. Most of us thought of Him as dwelling afar off in some glorious place called "Heaven," seated on a gilded throne, surrounded by a large company of angels, ever praising Him. It was a very anthropomorphic conception of God which we should have long since discarded with other childish notions. God cannot be visualized, nor pictured, nor imaged.

Moreover, many of us thought of Him not only as a King on a distant throne, but as a Judge at a tribunal, dealing out rewards and punishments in even-handed justice and we believed that for some reason unknown to us God could not forgive us as freely as a human father can forgive his children. It was necessary for Christ to die that God might forgive us. All our modern thinking makes such a conception of God grotesque.

The time has come when we must do our best thinking about God, ever daring to abandon any notions about Him that will not stand the test of our highest thought and our noblest moral intuitions. It is only in this way that God can become real to us and that our religion can become a vital factor in our lives.

Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him.

Heb. 11:6.

*Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace:
Thereby good shall come unto thee.*

Job 22:21.

IV

THE SUPREME VALUE

When we say the word "God" we mean Absolute Perfection. He is the embodiment of our supreme values, the personification of our ideal excellencies, the representative of our noblest impulses. "God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all."

We do not estimate all things as of equal value, for some are much more worthful to us than others. There are grades of value as there are grades of reality. "God" represents our highest values!

Some things have value as means to an end. Money, for example, has small intrinsic value; it is of worth because with it we can buy the necessities and some of the luxuries of life. But some things are inherently worthful, that is, valuable for their own sake. They are our superlative values. We could not accept, we could not reverence nor worship nor serve a God who did not seem to embody these values. He must be perfect in love, honor, truth, beauty, goodness, and personality.

It is as imperative for us to believe in our moral sense as in our reason. God must be at least the highest that we can conceive. "The highest we know in ourselves is a clue to the deepest nature of all reality."

Our appraisal of values changes as we grow older, as we gain a deeper insight into the meaning of life. Life should mean for all of us the recognition of new and greater values. That means that our thought of God changes. As we have gained sight of a new value, we have incorporated it into our conception of God. It is impossible for us now to worship the God of our childhood.

THE SUPREME VALUE

Nor can we worship the God of our fathers, for the history of the race is the record of expanding values, the progressive realization of higher ideal interests and aims. As the evolution of the race has proceeded, as human intelligence has increased, as society has taken on new and higher forms, the idea of God has been enlarged and expanded repeatedly.

To ask, "What did Jesus think about God?" is, in part, the same as, "What was Jesus' scale of values?" Do we worship the same God that He served or do we accept another? By studying His life, His motives and ideals and desires, we can discover His working philosophy of life, we can understand His appraisal of values. When we have done that, we know what He thought about God.

In "The Inner Chamber" we face the truth about God and ourselves. What would satisfy us, what would add to the fulness and richness of our lives, what would make us eminently successful and thoroughly happy? That is our "God!" But is this the way Jesus thought about His life, is this His appraisal of values? Are we indeed worshipping "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ?"

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things.

I Cor. 13:11.

Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

II Cor. 7:1.

THE ABSOLUTE REALITY

Let us think of God as the Absolute Reality, expressing Himself in all lesser grades of reality.

"For science there is one universe. It forms a single system in which all things have their place and function; it implies one ultimate reality, whose process of self-realization the universe is."

One age-long problem of human thinking has been that of the relation of spirit to matter. They seem to be utterly foreign to each other, constituting separate and mutually-exclusive worlds. Spirit can not be known by the senses; it is invisible, inaudible, intangible, immeasurable, imponderable, non-spacial, and non-temporal. Matter, on the other hand, can be apprehended by the senses, and is subject to the limitations of time and space. How can spirit and matter together form a unity? Must they not be the product of two separate original forces? How can a universe in which there is spirit and matter form one system of inter-connected law? How can the world be a logical, coherent whole?

We find the answer in thinking of one Absolute Reality—Spirit—realizing and expressing Itself in relative realities. What, then, is matter? A low-grade, inferior, phenomenal reality, mortal, transitory, with neither life nor intelligence of its own.

Matter is the "sacrament" of Spirit. "A sacrament is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." What is matter? It is "the outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual" reality! What is my body? It is "the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual" personality! What is nature, the whole natural order, the entire universe? It is "the

THE ABSOLUTE REALITY

outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual" God!

Matter seems to our senses to be refractory and recalcitrant to spirit. In fact, it is plastic, and yielding to spirit. Modern science is furnishing innumerable proofs of how "the mind influences the body." The "mighty works" of Jesus proved the plasticity of matter.

The scientist assumes that there is some objective reality to matter, and his experience substantiates this assumption.

We know that we cannot live without matter, that we are indissolubly associated with a material body, that that body has to be treated as if it had some reality. But we can demonstrate that the reality of matter in our bodies is only relative, by dominating and controlling it. When we recognize the fact that we are in inseparable union with God, the Absolute Reality, that we are made in His image and likeness, and when we permit Him to work in and through us, we can prove that matter is plastic, that, in fact, matter cannot resist God!

Thine, O Jehovah, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Jehovah, and thou art exalted as head above all.

I Chron. 29:11.

All things are of God.

I Cor. 11:12.

For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen.

Rom. 11:36.

VI

THE CREATIVE LIFE

Let us go on and think of God as the Creative Life, the Master Life, the Uncreated Life, the primordial Life-Force manifesting Itself on different levels, with different materials. Nature is the life of God at work in matter. We are the life of God at work in personality.

There is but One Life in the universe. Our senses deceive us. We think of a vast aggregation of individual organisms, each one living its own separate, isolated, and independent life. The fact is that there is but One Life finding all these centers of expression. The entire universe of things and centers of life is a single, rational whole, instinct with the One Creative Life. "There is one universe and God is the life of it."

As centers of Life, the one Life surges in and through us, Life with Its upward thrust, bearing us on to Its goal, even the image of Christ. If we would not sin, if we would not disobey the laws of Life, if we would get our individual selves out of the way, Life would bear us to Its objective, the stature of a perfect man in Christ Jesus, and we would have His holiness, His health, His happiness, and, like Him, live in heaven every day.

Christianity is a challenge to us to believe that because Jesus was normally and naturally human, the same Infinite Life that revealed Itself in and through Him, is in us, struggling to realize Itself in a life like His.

What is the matter with us? We think too much about ourselves, always planning for, and anxious about, ourselves! But consider Him who was at once Perfect Man and "God manifest in the flesh."

THE CREATIVE LIFE

He did not talk about Himself. He did not think about Himself. He did no "mighty works" for His own enrichment. He had a God-dominated consciousness. He was devoted to truth, wedded to peace, consecrated to love. He had no fears, no angers, no depressions, no exaltations, no antagonisms. He homed Himself in the Infinite, and, *therefore*, all the resources of the Infinite Creative Life were His. He was Himself perfected in character, greatened in personality, enriched in joy, and He healed the sick, preached the Gospel to the poor, and raised the dead!

We are conscious, individuated centers of the same Creative Life. We are not separate, exclusive individualities. We are organically, vitally related to all else in the universe. We form part of a vast organism, the Life of which is God, "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." We are distinct, but we are not separate from God. God's life includes, but transcends our own. He dwells in us, and in such a way that we retain our own personality and freedom and moral responsibility. "We are of God" and yet we are ourselves. St. Paul grasped the truth when he said, "I live" (a conscious, free, personal center of life), "yet not I, for Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20, A. V.). Religion does not bring us into union with Creative Life; it means the lifting up of that fact into consciousness.

All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

John 1:3-4.

A living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is. Acts 14:15.

VII

INFINITE PERSONALITY

In our day there is a wide-spread aversion to ascribing personality to God. It seems to make God anthropomorphic, to conceive of Him as a magnified man, possessing the attributes of humanity, only in an extraordinary degree. When we say that God is personal, some seem to understand that we think that we can make an image or picture of Him.

But to assert that the One Life is personal is far from affirming that God can be imaged or that He has what seem to be characteristic of our personalities—weakness, arbitrariness, capriciousness, irrationality, finitude. It is rather the assertion that God is self-conscious, that He has a mind and will and affections, that He can think and choose and love. We know that we are personal. Are we greater or higher than God? Is not Absolute Reality greater than Its manifestation? And consider how we speak of “Infinite Goodness,” “Infinite Wisdom,” “Infinite Love!” These terms are mere abstractions except as they are characteristics and qualities of personal life.

Religion connotes a fellowship. A fellowship can exist only between persons. Indeed, personality has been defined as “capacity for fellowship.” We know that we have that capacity, and therefore we affirm our personality. Take that capacity from God, and you quite utterly destroy religion to us. It becomes cold and almost heartless; it lacks the warmth and intimacy that we need. We can not commune with the impersonal. We can not pray to it. It does not love us, nor can it plan for us. And we can not love it. But the depths of the human heart cry out for fellowship with God. “As the heart panteth after the water

INFINITE PERSONALITY

brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God" (Ps. 42:1).

If we are to have the mind of Christ, His faith, His religion, we must think of God as He did. He believed that the Creative Life is personal. When He spoke of God, He always used personal pronouns. He believed in the oneness of all Life; "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30). How could personal life be one with the impersonal? And He impressed this conception upon His companions. Every disciple spoke of the One Life as being personal. And St. Paul gave expression to the mind of the Church, not only of the first century but of all centuries, when he spoke of God as "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It will not be easy for us to grasp the conception of Creative Life and Cosmic Energy being also Infinite Personality. It will challenge our hardest and clearest thinking. Patiently must we abandon all false ideas of personality, striving for the illumination of the Spirit.

We may find it helpful to term God "Super-Personality"—personal but in a sense we can not understand.

Do let us realize that we are trying with finite minds to grasp the Infinite! There are many facts about the material world concerning which we know little or nothing—such as, how the mind affects the body, the nature of electricity, and many others—but we do not therefore deny the facts. That God is personal we are sure. What personality means in Him we cannot fully comprehend.

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. Rev. 21:6.

VIII

GOD IS LOVE

We have already seen that if we deny that the One Life is personal, we cannot make the great Christian affirmation, "God is Love." Love is the highest characteristic of personal life. We see that not only in ourselves but supremely in Christ.

How do we know that God is Love, that He wills our good? How do we know that the Ultimate Reality of the universe is friendly to us? How do we know that goodness is the essential truth of our own being? How do we know that the Life which is operating in us, which we are in the depths of our being, is Perfect, Infinite Love?

In the first place, love is our highest value, and therefore we must ascribe it to God for no less than One who is the embodiment of our superlative values could be God to us. When men lived in kingdoms and empires and thought of God in terms of their earthly rulers, they did not conceive of God so much as Infinite and Perfect Love, as Power and Justice. But now, living in a democracy, we are gaining new moral insights and glimpsing new spiritual values. Today we cannot believe in a God who is not Eternal Love. We echo the words of Browning,

"The loving worm within its clod
Were diviner than a loveless God
Amid His worlds."

and we cry with him,

"God, Thou art Love! I build my faith on that."

We, who have accepted the Christian revelation in Christ, have another reason for believing that God

GOD IS LOVE

is Love, for we see that Love revealing itself in every word and deed of Him who is "God manifest in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16 A. V.) as well as very and truly man. Maeterlinck's word is ours: "Love is the form most divine of the infinite, and, also, because most divine, the form most profoundly human."

What a world this would be, what despair would fill our hearts, if, looking out on all the misery and wretchedness of human lives, we could not affirm that "God is Love"! What cynicism would possess us, if, seeing how men strive for place and power and wealth, we could not believe that men are most divine when they forget self in disinterested service!

"What has made Christianity an invincible power in the world has been the conviction that somehow or other the life of love is the best, the divinest life we can conceive, and that every one who even in moments knows what it is to lose himself in others is doing what God is doing eternally."¹ Let us take time in "The Inner Chamber" to realize that the One Creative Life is always giving of Its fulness to us, that God wills our happiness and health and the highest development of our character. No evil can come from Love. Underneath us are the everlasting arms of Perfect Love. We are "rooted and grounded in love" (Eph. 3:17). The innermost secret of a strong, masterful, happy, healthful life is love, is losing self in others, even as "God is doing eternally."

¹Nettleship.

Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For this cause the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. I John 3:1.

IX

IMMANENCE

The universe is an organism, not a machine. God is the vital principle of it, rather than its maker and ruler. He dwells within it and shapes it from within even as we dwell within our bodies and form and control them from within. It is this that we mean by "Immanence."

"The universe has no center, it is infinite as God is infinite, it is not outside of, nor apart from Him; God is Himself its soul, its indwelling life-principle, which unites all its changing phenomena into one harmonious inter-related and inter-dependent whole."

Because "all things are of God," there are no independent existences. Every spirit and thing has its reality and its value because it is a manifestation of the Absolute Reality and the Supreme Value of the universe.

The men and women who have had dynamic, medicinal personalities, who have breathed peace, exuded happiness, radiated health, and lived socially helpful lives, have been those who made resort to the fountal sources of their being. They knew that they lived in God, they willed to live for God, they dedicated their lives to God. They did not search for God without; they found Him within, the Life of their life, the Soul of their soul. They discovered the secret of freedom and mastery, health and happiness, in permitting God to vitalize and energize them, to live and work in and through them without hindrance or limitation. They declined to set up resistances to the inflow of that Life which is Life indeed.

Thousands of Christian people are still thinking of God as an oriental monarch ruling the world by arbi-

IMMANENCE

trary decrees, dealing out rewards and punishments, answering or refusing to answer prayer, sending sickness as a mark of His favor or disfavor, willing the death of their loved ones, interfering with the course of nature, violating natural laws, and demanding that His worshippers cringe as suppliants before His gilded throne. That conception of God must be worked out of consciousness by the most patient and persistent discipline.

Study the words, "We are of God" (1 John 5:19), "In Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28), until they glow with fresh meaning. We are now, whatever our life has been or now is, in vital, organic union with God. The One, Immanent Life is in all men; but not all, in fact, only a few, have discovered that truth of their being. But natural immanence is not enough. It must be made personal. It must be realized consciously and acknowledged. We are not separated from God. Sin may have caused a sense of separation which can be done away only by seeking and obtaining divine forgiveness. We are always "of God." When we realize this truth, all the immeasurable resources of the spiritual world are ours. Why do we live on the lower levels when God is calling us to share with Him, by virtue of union of life and being, His holiness and happiness and health?

"Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit with Spirit can meet—

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

It is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure.

Phil. 2:13.

X

TRANSCENDENCE

The conception of Immanence can degenerate into that of Pantheism, according to which there is no distinction between God, and the world of nature and man. They become identical. We need to be on our guard and to do our clearest thinking. If, as Pantheism declares, "God is present *equally* in every part of His creation," if He reveals Himself *equally* in all things and in all events, in the rose as in man, in the Great War as in the birth and resurrection of Christ, then it follows that all that is is perfect; everything that happens is His perfect will; there is no morality as there is no lower and no higher, no better and no worse; there is no sin, and there is no holiness; there is no progress, for the goal has already been reached; there is nothing higher than ourselves.

Transcendence is the corresponding truth to Immanence, and each needs the other for its own completion. God is distinct from all His creation, but everything is in union with Him. What we are to our bodies, God is to His creation. He is superior to, He transcends, yet lives in all that He has made. As Fechner said, "The Infinite does not lie beyond the finite, but the finite is the content of the Infinite."

The conception of an occasional wonder-worker of the old theology has been completely discredited. We no longer find it possible to believe in "miracles" in the sense of isolated exhibitions of divine power, strange and inexplicable. To us, all Nature is instinct with Divine Life.

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God."

TRANSCENDENCE

Nature is the expression of God's life and thought, but Nature is not God.

We find God within ourselves, the source of our highest thoughts, our noblest passions, and our ideal loyalties, but union does not mean identification. We are personalities, distinct from all else, with true moral autonomy. We are responsible for what we do. God's life includes ours, but transcends it. The creature is not equal to the Creator. Our life is derivative, while His Life is originative. "However high we may rise, there will always be an Almighty Power, a Living Will, an Eternal Love for us to reverence, worship, and adore."

Transcendence is also the affirmation that there are depths in Him we cannot fathom, heights we cannot measure. We may apprehend, but we cannot comprehend the Infinite. There are profound mysteries in God, in His nature and being, in His ways of working. We may but bow low in humble adoration before the world's inscrutable Mystery! The more we attend to Him, the more are we over-laden with a sense of His Majesty, and the greater is our awe and reverence in the presence of the Infinite and the Immeasurable. The time will never come when the "Te Deum" will cease to be the greatest hymn of praise to God.

"We praise Thee, O God, we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.
All the earth doth worship Thee: the Father everlasting.
Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory."

But will God in very deed dwell on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded!

I Kings 8:27.

XI

CHRIST REVEALS GOD

The early Church faced the same question that men in all generations have struggled to answer: What is the nature of Ultimate Reality? What is the character of the One Personal Life, God Transcendent and Immanent, the Father and the Holy Spirit?

The answer of the early Church was the same that we give now in the twentieth century. We credit the word of Christ, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). We, with St. Paul, see in Him, "the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15). There is nothing in Him contradictory to our highest thought of God. The more we study His life, the more we search out His motives and ideals, the more we feel that God is like Him. When we see Him, we see, as through an open window, into the innermost secrets of the heart of God. We know that God is Love.

Christianity rests upon this fundamental statement of the Incarnation, "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). The One Life in which all life finds its source, the Power behind phenomena, the matrix of personality, the Absolute Reality, the invisible Immanence, became visible in Christ. In will-attitudes, in value-judgments, in ethical aims, Christ was identical with God. In Him was the full expression of Ultimate Being that all men of every clime can understand. In Him was God focalized. "As the electric current makes the carbon to glow, so God made a man, Jesus of Nazareth, incandescent." The glory of the Infinite, Creative Life and Love shone forth in the face of Jesus Christ. In Him, the Lord and Giver of Life, who individuates Himself in all men, came to supreme expression. The Incarnation

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of God was not limited to Christ; it was fulfilled and perfected in Him. He was, in the phrase of Illingworth, "the climax of Divine Immanence."

We do not believe in Jesus Christ, we do not accept His moral and spiritual authority "on the ground that He performed extraordinary and superhuman miracles, or that He exactly fulfilled in a marvellously precise manner predictions about Himself uttered hundreds of years before by Jewish prophets, or that He was born into this world in an unique way and left it in an unique way," but because, when we study His character and manner of living, we cannot conceive of God, the Absolute Perfection, as being better or nobler than He. We believe that in Him there was "the truest and deepest unveiling of the Divine Nature which has yet been vouchsafed to humanity."

"There may be other Words in other worlds,
But for this world the Word of God is Christ."

He who denies the Divinity of Christ has no way to tell the character and mind of Infinite Personality. With no understanding of God, there can be no understanding of ourselves nor of the world; there can be no mighty power in the life, no unutterable peace in the mind, no complete and permanent health in the body. No words can express the debt we owe to the revelation of God in Christ.

Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father?

John 14:9.

XII

CHRIST REVEALS MAN

Perhaps it is easier for many of us to believe in the divinity of Christ than it is to believe in His humanity, easier to affirm that He reveals the truth about God than to affirm that He reveals the truth about humanity.

The Gospels record the story of One who was naturally and normally human. He passed through the stages of babyhood, youth, and manhood. He had both a mind and a body like ours. He had to obey the laws of sleep, exercise, and food. He was human as we are human, "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). The One Creative Life found no resistance in Him. When we look at Jesus of Nazareth, we see what that Master Life would make us if we permitted Him, if we offered no rebuffs to His working.

In our stressing of Christ's divinity, we have depreciated His humanity. We have not seen that perfect humanity is perfect divinity. So we have not dared to believe that we could and should repeat and share His experience.

Carlyle in "*Schiller*" declared: "Great men are the fire-pillars in this dark pilgrimage of mankind; they stand as everlasting witnesses of what has been, prophetic tokens of what may still be, the revealed, embodied possibilities of human nature." In the highest sense, the words are true of Christ. In Him, we see, as we see in no other, "the revealed, embodied possibilities of human nature."

We will need to spend much time in meditation on the fact that Christ was intensely and truly human. The same Spirit, the same Life that worked in Christ

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and made Him what He was, that gave Him His love, power, health, and happiness, is working in us. In Christ we see Life in all its regality and splendour, the Life that is also our life.

The urge of Life in us is upward toward Christ-likeness. Let us study the Gospel portrait of Christ until we grasp the fact that that masterful, virile, man was normally and truly human, the revelation of the thought of God about ourselves. The fact is that we are not yet truly human. We are rather struggling up into humanity. Sin is our refusal to let Creative Life make us like the type-life. Let us look at Christ and let the truth master us—the truth that holiness, happiness, and health will be ours as we coöperate with God, as we approach the image of Christ, the one truly normal man.

How much easier it is to believe in Christ than to believe in ourselves! Sin has dimmed our sight; our materialistic way of thinking has obscured the truth. We have accustomed our minds to a “worm-in-the dust” philosophy. The Christian religion summons us to really believe that we were made for God, for truth and love and nobility, for Christ-likeness, and that nothing but our fears and unbelief offer us obstructions. If we will, we can rise above our inheritance and our material and social environment and become veritable sons of God, and yet not by our own energy, but “by the power that worketh in us.”

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto the Father.

John 14:12

XIII

THE NATURE OF MAN

Christianity affirms that we have no certain knowledge of either God or human nature until we understand Christ. He was both God Incarnate and True Man. He actually realized what is potentially true of all human life. Religion means coming more and more into that realization which Jesus achieved every moment of His life.

Christianity declares that true living for God is after the manner of Jesus Christ. He lived the Christian Religion! In Him we see Life as Life truly is. In Him the Uncreated, Cosmic Life came to the fullest and richest expression possible in a human life. We see nothing in Him that we are not sure is in God. Our highest thought of God and our understanding of Christ agree. Likewise, our noblest conception of human nature and our understanding of Christ agree. He was "the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29), a brother to all of us because He was naturally and normally human.

Christian men have often been inclined to depreciate human nature, perhaps in the thought that the less respect that they had for it the greater would be their estimate of God. Now we are re-studying the word, "made in the image and likeness of God." If we depreciate human nature, we also depreciate the divine nature in whose "image and likeness" we are made.

We have tended to draw false distinctions between divine and human life, as if they were different in kind, in "substance." How can there be such a difference if "we live and move and have our being" in God? A great American theologian has voiced the truth, "We are finitely what God is infinitely."

THE NATURE OF MAN

No longer can we tolerate any statement of man's natural depravity. It is inconsistent with the teaching of Jesus and contrary to what we know about ourselves. That we have sinned and come short of the glory of God, we know; that we have been faithless to our highest obligations and disobedient to our heavenly visions, we know; that we have always been inclined to gratify our impulses and instincts in a manner unworthy of us, we know; but we are far from being inherently bad! There is so much good in us all that we refuse to take that gloomy view of human nature that has in so many cases made religion "a morbid and sickly affair."

"We are of God." Nothing is outside of the life of God. He is inescapably with us, the Life of our life, the Light of our seeing, awaiting complete recognition, realization, and expression.

We may find it difficult intellectually to harmonize the two truths of oneness with God and individual responsibility, but, as Sir Henry Jones says, we do not have to choose between two alternatives. We never so realize our individuality as when we are conscious of our oneness with God. As we give our self to God, we receive it back again, purified and enhanced. "He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it" (Matt. 10:39).

Some centuries before the Christian era, Plato said, "The duty of the wise man is to be like God." Jesus declared, "Ye shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). What a conception of human nature is involved in that word!

We know that we are of God.

I John 5:19.

XIV

MAN IS THE TEMPLE OF GOD

For many of us, it is not hard to see in Christ "the temple of God." Our faith is only daunted when we are asked to believe that of ourselves. We are too conscious of our failures. "We have within that which, so far as we know, no other creature on earth possesses, a sense of shortcoming and failure to achieve our true end. One of the most profoundly significant traits of human nature is this deep, ineradicable sense of sin, of being less than we are meant to be, of having erred and strayed, of being off the true track of our development."¹

Christianity comes as a challenge to our faith to dare to believe that sin is foreign to our nature; that the Life which we are is Itself never corrupted by sin nor vitiated by disease; that we are, indeed, the temples of the Lord of all Life.

Too much have we thought of God as outside of us, localized in some part of the universe. Now we are called to think of Him as our very Life, the Reality of our being. Religion then does not mean adding something to us, some new faculty or power, but, rather, the clear realization of what we already have.

"Truth is within ourselves—

There is an inmost center in us all,
Where Truth abides in fulness; and to know
Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendour may escape
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without."

Obviously we must reverse our thinking. Too

¹Anson.

MAN IS THE TEMPLE OF GOD

much have we thought of religion as being a method of getting an external Power to help us to live our life, to aid us to work out our plans of self-aggrandizement. Rather, it means living in God and working for God. It means forgetting self in our absorption in the purposes and plans of God. It means accepting literally the truth that each one of us is "the temple of God" (1 Cor. 3: 16). This revolutionary reversal of consciousness is not possible to our unaided strength. On our part, it involves the daily discipline of the thought-life, "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. 10:5). On God's part, it involves the constant suggestions of His Indwelling Spirit when, in "The Inner Chamber," we are quiet and relaxed. As these suggestions are accepted by our minds, we find ourselves approximating "the mind of Christ," its holiness and peace, its freedom from inner conflicts, with its accompanying health and vigor of body.

And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? for we are a temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

II Cor. 6:16.

Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroyeth the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, and such are ye.

I Cor. 3:16-17.

XV

REPENTANCE

"Repent and believe the Gospel!" That was the burden of Christ's message to men. It is His word to our generation. But what is "repentance"? Luther's answer was, "To do so no more is the truest repentance." It does not mean merely being sorry that we have done wrong. It means a reversal of consciousness. It is the deep and clear recognition of the fact that we have missed the mark, that we have made a false appraisal of values, that we have put trivial things up into the first place, that we have sought physical pleasure and material gratification instead of the Kingdom of God. Repentance means a right-about-face. It is not only grieving for our sins; it is the actual forsaking of them. There can be no forgiveness of sin as long as we remain in sin. Repentance is not primarily in the emotions; it is in the will.

"Man-like is it to fall into sin;
Fiend-like is it to dwell therein;
Christ-like is it for sin to grieve;
God-like is it, all sin to leave."

Religion demands, as Evelyn Underhill says, "a drastic over-haul of the elements of character, a real repentance and moral purgation, as the beginning of all personal spiritual life. Man does not, as a rule, reach without much effort and suffering the higher levels of his psychic being. His old attachments are hard; complexes of which he is hardly aware must be broken up before he can use the forces which they enchain. He must, then, examine without flinching his impulsive life, and know what is in his heart, before he is in a position to change it.

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'The light which shows us our sins,' says George Fox, 'is the light that heals us.' All those repressed cravings, those quietly unworthy motives, these mean acts which we instinctively thrust into the hiddenness, and disguise or forget, must be brought to the surface and, in the language of psychology, 'abreacted', in the language of religion, 'confessed.' The whole doctrine of repentance really hinges on this question of abreacting painful or wrongful experience instead of repressing it. The broken and contrite heart is the heart of which the hard complexes have been shattered by sorrow and love, and their elements brought up into consciousness, and faced; and only the self which has endured this, can hope to be established in the free Spirit. It is a process of spiritual hygiene."

In our day there appears to be a deep aversion to any teaching about sin, yet nothing is more needed. We must not tone down the teaching of Christ to suit a morally insensitive generation. Sin blights and destroys the spiritual life, now as when the Prophet of Galilee declared the Gospel of redeeming love.

"No wider is the gate,
No broader is the way,
No smoother is the ancient path,
That leads to life and day."

Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel. Mark 1: 14-15.

I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you . . . repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 20:20-21.

XVI

EVIL HAS CONSEQUENCES

We need today to gain a new and fresh view of the consequences of evil. Since the Great War there has been a moral slump, a tendency to lawlessness, such as the world has not witnessed for many years and we need to learn a "fear of the Lord, (which) is the beginning of wisdom," the fear of breaking the laws of Life.

God does not lay punishments upon us. The early and crude conception was that of a Judge sitting at the bar, dealing out rewards and punishments. We punish ourselves. Sin is the violation of the laws of our own nature. It is the yielding to the downward pull of the animal in us instead of responding to the upward urge of the Life of God. And that sin has consequences. As Browning said, "Our sins leave their traces."

"Our deeds pursue us from afar,
And what we have been
Makes us what we are."

Because "we are of God," the law of holiness is as natural, and operates as naturally, as any of the physical laws. It, too, has its own penalty for transgression. The time has fully come when we must recognize the validity of law in our own nature. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). The penalty for a breach of the moral law may be deferred, but it comes sooner or later—inevitably. Sin!

"It hardens all within,
And petrifies the feeling."

"It is the little rift within the lute,
That by and by will make the music mute,
And ever widening, slowly silence all."

EVIL HAS CONSEQUENCES

What we term "sin" may once have been healthy and normal for man, but that was when no ideals of a life like Christ lured him on. He lived as an animal and was happy as animals are happy. But now we cannot revert to animalism. We feel Life's upward tug. "Forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before", we must "press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14). Sin has its consequences because it is not truly natural. It is as much a violation of the laws of our nature as putting our hands into the fire. We are of God and made for God. A failure to live the Christ-life is sin, and this evil has consequences in mind and body.

It is possible to have too dominant a sense of sin. In some unhappy lives it goes so far as to lead them to think that they have committed "the unpardonable sin." We need to frankly confess our shortcomings, and then attain a healthy self-respect. There is no place for groveling and wailing and unworthy self-abasement. The Eternal Love waits to forgive, heal, and restore any man who earnestly desires to be freed from his sins. Despite all the past, God still believes in us, sees great possibilities in us, and will lift us up to a new life of nobility and peace.

*He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul:
All they that hate me love death.* Prov. 8:36.

*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever
a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that
soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap cor-
ruption; but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of
the Spirit reap eternal life.* Gal. 6:7-8.

XVII

CHRIST DIED FOR US

"Every man who lives in the habitual practice of a voluntary sin cuts himself off from Christianity."¹

"I could not live in peace if I put the shadow of a wilful sin between myself and God."²

"I heard a voice which said, 'There is one, even Jesus Christ, that can speak to thy condition.' And when I heard it my heart did leap for joy."³

Every generation has thought of God in terms of its social and political ideals. When the early Christians began to think of the death of Christ, they tried to construct a theory of how the great King on His throne could forgive sin without sacrificing His justice or His law. That became the task of the theologians of every generation. We have outgrown the ideals of former centuries, and therefore we need no doctrine of ransom, or sacrifice, or satisfaction. Our belief is in an immanent-transcendent God of Life and Love. It is impossible for us to think that Christ died to bear "the quantitative equivalent of all the punishments due to all the sins of the world;" or that "as a substitute for us He bore sufferings which in our case would have been punishment;" or that "by His death He expiated the sins of mankind and appeased an angry God."

We share with Christian people of all centuries the conviction that Jesus died for us and all mankind, but we believe that that death did not make it possible for God to forgive us, but, rather, proclaimed that God is ever ready to forgive any one who is forgivable, that

¹Addison. ²George Eliot. ³George Fox.

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is, who desires forgiveness and is ready to forsake all sin.

We see that "God was in Christ" on the Cross, as elsewhere and always. In that agony we perceive what sin means to God. It wounds the heart of Eternal Love! Every sin that we commit, every "I won't" that we say to God, hurts Him! Christ's death was necessary because mankind needed to know what human sin means to God.

Moreover it was necessary because we needed to know what God still thinks of us, whether, indeed, He still loves us. And that is the moral dynamic of the Cross! Christ made such revelation of the infinite love of God as no other could, either by life or by death. As "God manifest in the flesh," He died at the hands of sinful men, not to appease divine wrath, but to reveal divine love. He Himself never wavered in His belief in that fundamental fact. He went to Calvary without questioning it. He died that we might believe it. We need no other proof. Though the words, "God is Love" were written in letters of glowing fire across the darkness of the night, it would be unnecessary. Though the flowers of summer-time gathered with one intent and wrote across the meadows, "God is Love," we need not the evidence. Christ died for us!

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.

John 3:16.

But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Rom. 5:8.

XVIII

DIVINE FORGIVENESS

It is one thing to affirm that evil has no power except that which we concede to it and quite another thing to deny its existence. "Jesus Himself was farthest possible from denying the existence of evil from which God would deliver us. The age was indeed evil and would make His disciples its victims as surely as it made Him. He practiced no auto-suggestion in order to make Gethsemane an illusion. The despair of the cross was as real as the cross itself. There is too much at stake in the moral realm to risk training oneself to believe that non-existent, the reality of which is witnessed by the totality of human experience. If the universe is not as satisfactory as we should like to have it, it is the only universe we have. To lose the capacity to face its mysteries with level eyes, is too high a price to pay for regaining one's health."¹

The statement that "evil is simply a lie and any one who mentions it is a liar" will never be accepted by the Christian consciousness. Such a shallow conception is as far from the mind of Christ as the antipodes from each other. His word to the sinful was and is, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." He taught men to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." St. John reflected the thought of the Master when he said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." Jesus enunciated no philosophy of evil, He gave no explanation of its origin, but He never minimized its terrible results in the lives of men. The first word of a truly Christian system of teaching must be, "Thy sins be forgiven thee."

¹Mathews.

DIVINE FORGIVENESS

That God is love and that He gladly forgives the sin that is confessed and forsaken, is a primary element of the Gospel, the Good News of Christ and Christianity. Jesus did not die to placate the wrath of God, nor to render it possible for Him to forgive us. That uttermost self-sacrifice revealed God's love and His readiness to forgive. Our sin is against the law, the very being of God; He only can forgive it. Our sin is against the law of our own nature; only God can bring the help that we need to overcome it.

Who can be forgiven? He who lives after the manner of Jesus Christ, who adopts His scale of values, who refuses to live in the material, and homes himself in the spiritual, who obeys the law of love in every situation. "The loving God of the universe will save a man who tries to live like Jesus." Such a man carries in himself the witness of divine forgiveness. The past has been wiped out; the future has no terrors for him. "He stands in the same universe in which he stood before, only the scales have fallen from his eyes." He has no fear when he thinks of God. With a new power, a new courage, a new joy, he faces every situation and problem of the present, knowing that defeat is unthinkable, and victory over sin, poverty, disease, and death certain.

*For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive,
And abundant in lovingkindness unto all them that call
upon thee.*

Ps. 86:5.

Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Isa. 1:18.

XIX

THE IMPOTENCE OF EVIL

A.

To secure a true solution of the problem of evil, to know what it is and an effective method of dealing with it, we need not deny the results of evil in the world; that would mean shutting our eyes to facts, a procedure either dishonest or cowardly. There is evil in the world, and its results are patent to every one.

What is moral evil? The answer is brief and concise: it is a false value! Let us put it this way: why do we commit evil? Because we choose it! Why do we choose it? Because at that moment it seems to be for some reason desirable and advantageous, that is, a value. But evil is a false value! It is a violation of the laws of reality. It has no basis in fact. Its promises cannot be fulfilled. It is a sham, a counterfeit which has worth only so long as we do not see it as it really is.

There was no moral evil in the world until that momentous day when man first glimpsed an ideal that made him restless and discontented with what he had been, that fateful day when he first saw the vision of a life higher than that of the animals. On that day there was born in him a new appraisal of values, and he began to see things in a different way from that of the brutes. It was then that a new being was created or evolved (which is the same thing), a free, moral personality, able to distinguish between right and wrong, capable of fellowship with the Infinite Spirit of the universe. It was then that humanity commenced its long and arduous climb to the heights.

And on that day, with its ideal that allured man to

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a higher stage of existence, evil became possible and probable. Along with the upward urge there continued the downward pull, the tendency to animal satisfactions, the striving to gain pleasure or profit through gratifying the instincts in the old manner of the animal. What then is sin? It is regression; it is disloyalty to the higher call, "the heavenly vision"; it is faithlessness to the higher values of truth, love, and honor; it is disobedience to God.

The capital error has been in thinking of evil as a force, an energy, an entity, or substance. Evil would be destroyed today if all personal spirits, simultaneously and suddenly, would stop thinking and doing evil.

We can train ourselves to think good; we can discipline our thought-life after the manner of Jesus Christ, the embodiment of perfect humanity. There is no evil power compelling us to accede to its authority. It is not an entity or substance, for there is no moral evil apart from a personality. It is a false value, and when we do evil we are suffering from an illusion, one that urgently needs to be dispelled.

Evil is utterly impotent. We are free from it the moment we recognize its falsity and dismiss it from consciousness.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Rom. 8:38-39.

XX

THE IMPOTENCE OF EVIL

B.

The so-called power of evil lies in its disguises and only there, for no one would choose it if he saw it as it is in truth, a false value, established on no law of reality, conferring neither benefit nor advantage. Evil appears to be what it is not. It is a masquerader, wearing a mask to hide its hideous face, and decking itself out in garments of truth and beauty. Tear off its mask and see it! See it in its native ugliness! It is a violation of the laws of our being; it spells degradation; it lowers us in the scale of life; it adds misery to our lot; it produces inner discords and conflicts; it decreases our powers of resistance to disease; it obstructs God; it resists the creative and healing Energy of Life. If we saw evil as it is, if we had eyes open to its inevitable results, if we never succeeded in making ourselves believe that it was a true value, we would not, and could not, do evil.

The power of goodness, of unselfish, disinterested service, that is, of love, is the opposite of this. Love needs no disguise. It would but be known! It only demands recognition! If the power of evil is in its disguise, the power of Love is in its revelation. Perfect Love revealed is irresistible, omnipotent. Try this experiment: take time to meditate on the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross; see Him as the incarnation of Absolute Love; hear Him cry, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do;" intensify thought upon Him until you realize the exceeding greatness of the love of God for you. In that moment you cannot sin. You are so made in the image and likeness of God that Perfect Love will enchant and win

THE IMPOTENCE OF EVIL

you to its obedience. The omnipotence of God is the all-compelling power of Love fully revealed.

But evil has no power unless we give it attention and are enticed by its false claims upon our desire or are frightened by its blustering ways. But see it as evil! It cannot make us happier, it cannot give us greater health, it cannot make us more effective in work, it cannot improve or make us better in any way, it cannot confer any advantage whatsoever.

The power of evil is destroyed when its deceptiveness, its falsity is exposed. Unfortunately some of us have been trained to think that evil is very desirable for this life, but, because a supposed arbitrary and despotic God opposes it, it must be given up if we would go to heaven and escape hell. The truth is that evil is contrary to the will of God because it is a violation of the very laws of reality, human as well as divine. It appears to be desirable, but it is false, through and through and through and through!

How then shall we meet the problem of moral evil? We must make up our minds that as for us we will so center thought upon Perfect Love that evil will be driven from consciousness; we will let our ears be so full of the music of the lyre of Orpheus that we will not hear the songs of the sirens. Evil is not an objective reality. It is a sham, a delusion, a false value. It is utterly powerless over any one who simply refuses to think it.

He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Mic. 6:8.

XXI

RESIST NOT EVIL

We may gain a correct solution of the crucial problem of how to deal with evil if we clearly understand what evil is. If the prevailing view that evil is an external force is right, doubtless we should meet it by direct attack, but if that view is false, then Christ's method of non-resistance (Matt. 5:39, Margin) is the only effective method.

Let us then grasp the fact that both good and evil are characteristics of what is real, but that they are not themselves separate realities. As something objective and real, neither good nor evil exists. "Moral good and evil are ways in which the will operates; they are evaluations; estimates of facts true or false. They exist only when, and as long as, the process of willing goes on." Good and evil, then, are characteristics of personalities capable of moral choice.

The method of direct assault has been tried long enough and has been found wanting. When we keep evil before our eyes, as a general of an army watches his enemy, when we permit our minds to be full of its attractiveness or its horror, when we struggle and strain with utmost will-power against it, there is usually the one result—we do that which later we loathe. And "the law of reversed effort" comes in; the harder we struggle in that fashion, the more sure we are to commit the sin. "The good which I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I practice" (Rom. 7:19). Thousands through the centuries have repeated that experience of St. Paul.

But the Apostle to the Gentiles learned his lesson. To the cry, "Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" he answered, "I thank God through Jesus

RESIST NOT EVIL

Christ our Lord" (Rom. 7:24-25).

He himself practised the method suggested to the Church at Colossæ, "Set your mind on things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth" (Col. 3:2), and to the Philippians, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). He realized the falsity of evil, and therefore centered his mind on the real. He did not resist evil; he banished it from consciousness; he treated it as non-existent; he disciplined his mind to be as oblivious to it as a dead man is to his surroundings, and urged the Roman Christians to do the same (Rom. 6:11).

A newspaper publisher in an American city who has recently had a controversy with a manufacturer, never prints an attack upon his opponent. He simply declines to permit the man's name to appear in his paper in any connection whatsoever!

So the great Apostle learned of his Master to treat evil. He refused to give it the courtesy of a thought. He demonstrated "the expulsive power of a new affection" by fixing his mind on the spiritual, the real, the true.

I say unto you, Resist not evil.

Matt. 5:39. (Margin)

Be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Rom. 12:2:

GOD DOES NOT WILL SUFFERING

Many Christians are still burdened with the traditional belief that all suffering is good for us and that God wills or sends it. But suffering in itself is not a value; it is not to be desired for its own sake. The belief in the intrinsic value of suffering which but recently was a part of the Christian consciousness finds no support in any recorded word of the Master. His whole activity with the lame and the halt, the blind and the deaf, the poor and the sorrowing, points to His faith that God did not will nor desire such suffering.

Suffering accepted in loyalty to our cause, the pain of a mother in child-birth, the wounds of the soldier on the battlefield, the discomforts of the missionary at a distant and lonely and unhealthful place of service, the agony of Jesus in the Garden and on the Cross—such suffering is remedial and creative. And suffering that comes to us through our own or others' fault, or mistake, or sin, may also be medicinal and corrective and educational. It all depends upon the spirit with which we meet it. If it leads to complaining and reproach, to hardness and bitterness, then suffering is degrading and utterly harmful.

We can meet any suffering with fortitude and even gladness if we hold with immutable conviction that we are conscious centers of God's life and that He, instead of willing that suffering for us, actually suffers with us. According to our philosophy, we do not suffer alone. We may believe with Hawthorne that "it is holy ground where the shadows fall", for there we can know both the love and the sympathy and the power of God. In that hour of trial, we may sweep away all

GOD DOES NOT WILL SUFFERING

unrealities from our religion and nourish our hearts with the fundamental truth of a God, a Heavenly Father, who loves us to the uttermost and shares our suffering with us as we share life with Him. We may determine that we will make this suffering a stepping-stone to higher ground, that it will lead us to a greater sympathy with others who are buffeted and beaten with manifold sorrows. God knows us and our suffering, and nothing lies outside His ken; He knows that, as centers of His Life, we have the capacity to bear any sorrow that can come to us; and He trusts us to stand firm without complaining, to be loyal to our highest ideals and faithful to our noblest visions. He did not will nor desire that suffering, but He can empower us so that out of that evil good may come to us and through us to others. Milton said, "Who best can suffer, best can do." Though we know that our suffering did not come from Him, nor represent His will for us, we can use it as an open door to a higher and a richer life. We need not rail it off as a part of life that is irreclaimable. We may forget ourselves and our suffering in a life of sympathy and loving service to others whose burdens are perhaps heavier than ours, whose sorrows are more poignant than ours.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

II Cor. 1:3.

In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Rom. 8:37.

XXIII

THE DESIRE FOR HEALTH

When we say the word "health," we are using a word difficult to define, and yet we all know what it means. In our employ of the word, we do not mean physical health alone, but that of the entire personality. It is well to note that there is a common root for the words "health," "holiness," and "wholeness." A healthful man is a man whole and sound in body and mind and spirit, capable of doing that work to which God has called him.

When our bodies are in the greatest state of health we are practically unconscious of them. Health is "ease," and ill-health is "dis-ease."

We all have a strong desire for health. We may say that the whole human race is beginning to see that sickness is an evil. The great modern movements to discover and destroy the causes of disease, our hospitals and sanitariums, all witness to the fact that health is in our judgment altogether desirable.

What a wonderful thing health is! To rise in the morning eager for life, refreshed and ready for work, to go to our meals with a hearty appetite, to work without undue fatigue, to be physically and mentally efficient for every task, and then be ready to sleep quietly and restfully with a sense of a day well-spent—no wonder we want to be well and to stay well!

Health is a necessity for a life of happiness. We may well believe that the joy of the sunny man of Galilee was in part due to His abounding health. There are men and women who rise above their weaknesses and infirmities and maintain inner peace and serenity, but it is a difficult task for most of us. We need health if we are to solve the problem of happiness.

THE DESIRE FOR HEALTH

And health is a necessity for a life of efficient work. Some great workers we know have accomplished much without health, but how much more would they have done if they had not put so much time and energy and thought on this problem! The well-being of society demands loyal, efficient workers, and there is no place today for the idle poor or the idle rich. But effective work is dependent upon health. Indeed, what is health but normal capacity for work?

Moreover, health is a necessity of the moral and religious life. There have been great saints who have not had health, but for most of us it is difficult to pray, to meditate, to study, with a body racked with pain, or wasted by disease. It is not easy to "practice the presence of God" with a sick headache nor with a disordered digestive system!

And this universal and legitimate desire for health is one evidence of the Indwelling Spirit of God.

Beloved, I pray that in all things thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

III John 2.

*Bless the Lord, O my soul;
And all that is within me, bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And forget not all his benefits:
Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;
Who healeth all thy diseases.*

Ps. 103:1-3.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service.

Rom. 12:1.

THE PRESERVATION OF HEALTH IS A DUTY

A generation ago Herbert Spencer insisted that "the preservation of health is a duty." He added, "Few seem conscious that there is such a thing as physical morality."

The necessity still remains to make a like insistence today. Still are there throngs of people—even Christian people—who are squandering their heritage of health, either through ignorance or carelessness or willfulness. Do they not know that God wills health always? Do they not realize that knowingly to break the laws of health of mind or body is a sin against self, against society, and against God?

It is simply incredible how many Christian people are ignorant of or careless in regard to the laws of health. An appalling number of deaths have been attributed to God that have been caused by culpable ignorance of the ordinary rules of hygiene. Thousands of useful lives have been lost by preventable disease. A stupendous amount of suffering and sorrow has been endured because the Church has not insisted that sickness is always and everywhere an evil, and that therefore we are under positive obligation to maintain our health.

The essentials of health may be summarized as proper food, pure air, cleanliness, adequate exercise, sleep, and recreation, the right kind of clothing, and a quiet, normal mind. It is unconscious blasphemy to attribute disease to God when it is due to our own stupidity, or ignorance, or willfulness, or sloth, sins of omission as well as commission. We blame God for our own folly! It is our duty to obey the laws of hygiene as

THE PRESERVATION OF HEALTH IS A DUTY

it is our duty to commune with God and to serve in His Kingdom.

We should guard against both carelessness and over-carefulness in regard to our health. It is well to know where we are weak through heredity and govern ourselves accordingly. When we know that we are obeying the simple rules of health, we should then go about our work, joyously anticipating perfect health. The more we give anxious thought to the condition of our bodies, the less health we shall have. Let us keep the laws, and then cultivate an enthusiastic expectation of health!

Today we are re-interpreting the Gospel. The forgiveness of sins and the healing of the body, as seen in the ministry of Christ, are aspects of the one and the same act of God. They are phases of the one divine conflict with evil. As Selwyn says, in a masterly book called "*The Teaching of Christ*," "Disease for Him belongs to the sphere of things evil, and as such is to be fought and exterminated. Accordingly, we find that His own attitude towards it is uniformly one of combat."

If we would have "the mind of Christ," we must accept His viewpoint on sickness. It is our duty to have the health that our present knowledge of the laws governing our minds and bodies permits. It is our duty to spread that knowledge everywhere that God's will may be done and this gigantic evil be ere-long destroyed from among men.

If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Rom. 8:11.

GOD DOES NOT WILL SICKNESS

Too long has the false belief that God wills human sickness remained in the minds of Christian people. The time has full come when we must return to the faith of Christ, the apostles, and the primitive Church, and believe that God never desires nor wills a single case of sickness, either as a reward or a punishment or a discipline.

We assert that we are conscious, individuated centers of Infinite Life, that Master Life which is the only creative and curative power or agency in the universe. Sickness is the result of the breaking of the laws of life in some way known or unknown to us. But as surely as fire burns or the trees bud and leaf, so surely does life heal when the laws are obeyed. How could God cause sickness?

We affirm that God is Perfect Goodness and Love. Love leads us to fight every attack of disease in the lives of our children. We are on the side of every public health movement in the world seeking to discover and destroy anything which tends to undermine the health of the people. Is it at all conceivable that Perfect Love would will that which our imperfect love abhors?

If there remained any doubt in our minds about the attitude of God towards sickness, it would be destroyed by an unprejudiced reading of the Gospel records of Him who was "God manifest in the flesh" and who spent an almost incredible amount of time and energy in healing the sick, apparently without any idea that sickness was a punishment or a discipline or a reward. He healed where He found faith. Was Jesus thwarting the will of God?

GOD DOES NOT WILL SICKNESS

Nor is there any indication that Jesus Himself did not know the secret of perfect health. To be sure, we have inherited the pictures of the Italian Renaissance with their white-faced, anemic, sickly, monkish Christ, but, when, with unbiased minds, we open the pages of the New Testament we catch glimpses of a perfect Man, strong, masterful, virile, with abounding vigor of mind and body. Today we are constrained to picture Him with the body of an athlete, the mind of an intellectual giant, and the spirit of God, and to believe that Creative Wisdom and Love wills for us that perfect health of mind and body manifested in Him, the ideal, representative man.

The argument becomes unanswerable when we reflect upon the fact that God has so made our bodies that they always tend to health, that within them there is an inner curative agency upon which every system of healing depends. Is not this positive evidence that God wills health?

There is great cause for thanksgiving that now all over the world there are throngs of Christian people ready to say to every man, woman, and child, sick with either functional or organic disease, "God wills your perfect health."

O Jehovah my God,

I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.

Ps. 30:2.

Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy healing shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of Jehovah shall be thy rearward. Then shalt thou call, and Jehovah will answer; thou shalt cry, and he will say, Here I am.

Isa. 58:8-9.

THE SOURCE OF HEALTH AND HEALING

The question constantly arises in the study of the relation of religion to mental and physical health, what is the source of health? What heals? What is the curative power? We may first say what it is not, and then what it is.

It is not medicine nor drugs, as all our foremost medical men admit. They assert that there is some mysterious healing agency in the body and that their treatment, either by drug or operation, furnishes it the right conditions for its functioning. They often-times call this power, "Nature" or, more learnedly, the "*Vis medicatrix naturæ*".

Neither is it psycho-analysis. The advocates of this science claim only that analysis removes obstacles, such as distressing memories or morbid emotions in the unconscious mind, to the healing power of "Nature".

Neither is it auto- or hetero-suggestion for that is simply a means of getting a conviction into the unconscious mind.

Neither is it thought. A common mistake is that of attributing power to an idea as if it were an entity or substance or energy, but this is the discarded atomistic psychology. When we say, "I have an idea", we mean, "I think".

Neither is the mind the healing power. When we say "the mind", we mean a capacity or power of the self. It expresses what the self does—it thinks.

Nor is faith the healing agency. "Faith" is a word descriptive of certain mental and emotional states or attitudes of the self; it is not an energy nor an entity.

What then is the curative power? It is, simply,

THE SOURCE OF HEALTH AND HEALING

God! It is Creative Life, the only power in the universe that can create or heal. Every effective remedy known to man, material, mental, or spiritual, simply prepares the proper conditions so that this great and beneficent healing power can work. Ambrose Paré, the French surgeon, put the words above the door of his hospital in Paris, "I dress the wound; God heals it".

We see the utter necessity for right thinking and feeling. By our thought and emotions we can release or obstruct this healing energy. Fear, anger, envy, jealousy, depression hinder its effective working. It is a demonstrable fact that all unhealthy mental and emotional habits reduce our vitality, that is, impede the working of that Life, which we share.

It is important that we see that material as well as spiritual methods may assist God. The decayed tooth should be extracted, the broken bone should be set, the diseased appendix should be removed; there are many ways by which medical science, by operation or drug, can, in an emergency, help the healing power. But the more proficient we become in the use of spiritual methods, the less will we be dependent upon material remedies and treatments.

When it is needful to use material means, let us not think of the means but only of the end to be attained. Let the mind be centered upon the Creative Life which does the healing! In every case of healing, whatever the means used, let all glory be given to God, the source of all health and healing.

I am the Lord that healeth thee. Ex. 15:26.

The Lord will take away from thee all sickness.
Deut. 7:15.

XXVII

THE HEALTH OF THE BODY

Matter in the body has only an inferior, phenomenal reality. As finite creators, we make our bodies to be the instruments of the spirit, the means of expression of that life which we are. They are our servants to be trained for useful service; not our slaves to be ill-treated, nor our masters to be catered to and pampered. When the body is allowed to get out of its place, to be anything but that which it was made for, trouble may be expected.

The connection between the mind and the body is so intimate that the health or the lack of health of the one reacts on that of the other. Mind and body are not two separate entities, each having its own independent existence. The well-being of both depends upon their co-ordination, their harmony with each other and with the master life.

A loving mind makes for a healthful body. We must grasp and accept the truth that we are made in the image and likeness of God who is Love and that therefore love is the law of our being. Let no one think that that law can be broken without consequences. Our Lord would not have had His perfect health if He had ever cherished thoughts of ill-will to any man, woman, or child. He lived and died in the hope of adding to the fulness of life of every one of His "brethren". He demonstrated for all time that if we are to have perfect, elastic health we must love our neighbors as ourselves; we must desire for them what we wish for ourselves; we must indulge in no criticism nor gossip; we must have neither scorn nor contempt for any living soul.

A mind "set on things which are above", on the

THE HEALTH OF THE BODY

spiritual, on Absolute Reality, makes for the health of the body. As long as we look to the material as the source of happiness there cannot be perfect health of the body. This truth must also be grasped and accepted. Matter has its place; it is not to be denied as if it were non-existent; but its place is a subordinate one because its reality is only partial and relative. It must be put into its own rightful place, never to be despised nor depended upon, if we would have that health of body necessary for a co-worker with God.

God is the Master-Workman of the universe. His plans and purposes are creation-wide and eternity-long, and we are His helpers. There is no other reason for our existence. To be efficient helpers, we need health. Do you think that God does not know that? Does He not desire our health more than we do? If we live in and for Him, with no aim nor ambition for ourselves but that of being faithful and efficient workers with Him, we can claim the health of Christ.

But let us not think that we can practice the principles of what is crudely called "Spiritual Healing" if we are willfully or carelessly breaking the laws of health. We cannot substitute prayer or meditation for exercise, sleep, fresh air, and proper food. St. Peter's word, "casting all your anxiety upon Him for He careth for you" (I Pet. 5:7), does not mean that we can neglect the ordinary rules of hygiene and then expect God to make up for us what we have lost. We must learn how to live and work normally, and *then* cast all anxiety upon God.

*With long life will I satisfy him,
And show him my salvation. Ps. 91:16.*

XXVIII

SPIRITUAL HEALING

Let us not make the mistake of depreciating or neglecting physical health nor that of putting it among the first things of life, to be sought for directly, and for its own sake. The Master believed that the universe is so constructed that all needful material things are most surely and easily secured when attention is taken from them and centered on things spiritual.

“Seek ye first His Kingdom and His righteousness: and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matt. 6:33).

He did not mean that we do not have to eat and sleep and work for our daily bread. He did not blind His eyes to the needs of the lower nature. His message was: Intensify on the spiritual. Keep the material and the physical always in the margin or fringe of consciousness, there and only there, but *center* consciousness on the spiritual. These things which others are so wildly seeking, for which they live and die, which they make the objects of life, but which, when found, do not give peace or health or happiness, will come to you as accessory, as the natural outcome or result of living on the higher side. They are part of the fruitage of the Spirit. God desires these things for you more than you desire them for yourselves. When He is supreme in your thoughts and desires, these things will be “added unto you.” When you seek the spiritual consciously, when your mind functions normally in the presence of God, in the pursuit of “the Way, and the Truth, and the Life,” all material goods which your life needs for effective, happy, and health-

SPIRITUAL HEALING

ful living will come to you without any striving on your part.

It may be noted here that it cannot always be said of a sick man, "He would get well if he had faith." Such a remark has plunged many a sick person into black despair, for, so far as he knows, he has faith. Disease comes from breaking the laws of life, but in our present state of knowledge we may not know in a given case, what laws have been broken, nor why the sick man does not get well.

Our mental attitude here is exactly that of medical science in a similar situation. When the question is asked, "What is the cause of the failure? Does it not prove lack of faith? Or, may it not be that God does not will healing in this case?", our answer would be, "We simply do not know the cause of the failure. There is no question in our mind about the will of Creative Life and Love. The man seems to be using spiritual methods intelligently, and we have done our utmost to help him. We are compelled to be humble and to admit that our knowledge of the subject is not, as yet, far enough advanced to give success in this instance, nor to explain the cause of the failure".

Our failures in the application of religion to daily problems should not discourage us, but, rather, drive us to a greater earnestness in our search for truth and to a keener desire to coöperate with the Divine Will.

According to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death.

Phil. 1:20.

THE UNIFORMITY OF NATURE

If by the word "miracle" we meant simply a great event which excited our wonder, we could retain the word today. If by the word we meant a wonderful event leading to some experience by which we became sure of God, we could even advocate the use of the word. Unfortunately, "miracle" now means an act of caprice on the part of God, an arbitrary violation of the laws of Nature. With that meaning the word can no longer be in the vocabulary of a thoughtful Christian trained in the modern conceptions of the world. We are more and more confident that we live in a universe of law, that is, in a reasonable world where like effects follow like causes, where, if the same conditions are present, the same results will ensue. We mean by a "law", not a cause nor an energy, but a generalized statement, a shorthand report of our observation of Nature's uniformity of action.

To some minds this uniformity is a stumbling block to faith. They would find God only in the gaps of our knowledge, only in a broken law, only in an arbitrary Divine intervention. The laws of Nature are the expression of the rationality and dependability of an Infinite, Personal Life-Force. "The demand of those who would see broken laws is the same as that of the scribes and Pharisees for a sign, and no sign shall be given them. The man who cannot see the touch of divinity in the life-activity of the cell or in the autumn coloring of leaves, who cannot realize the majesty and power of God in the order and uniformity of Nature, who cannot so put himself in sympathy with Nature that Christ's words concerning her seem to him in-

THE UNIFORMITY OF NATURE

instinctively words of truth, and so words of God because they are the words of truth, has injured his soul and will not believe though one rose from the dead, still less *that* One rose from the dead. To demand such interference is to go back to the early Israelitish conception of a capricious God. And yet no one can dogmatically affirm that God does not interfere. Man interferes with the order of Nature, and what is possible with man may well be possible with God. Man interferes, but ever in obedience to other laws. And so may God interfere, but in no lawless way: rather through the medium of relationships or laws other than those that are already open to our comprehension.”¹

We may well believe that Jesus of Nazareth had no unique energy at His disposal. He did “mighty works,” but He performed no “miracles.” The Infinite Personal Life-Force worked through Him as He would through all of us. If we would repeat the conditions under which Jesus lived, if we would approximate His desire, understanding, and obedience to law, the same results would follow. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12).

¹J. Y. Simpson.

Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, Teacher, we would see a sign from thee.
Matt. 12:38.

And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief.

Mark 6:5-6.

LET US NOT EXPECT MIRACLES

A law of Nature does not explain Nature. It is simply our statement of how Nature, or rather, the Infinite Energy, works. "Nothing happens through law, though everything happens according to law." We cannot say that there is anything that cannot happen, for our knowledge falls far short of omniscience, but we may say that every occurrence must be according to law. "God is unchangeable, the same yesterday, today, and forever, not merely in His essence but in the fundamental method of His working."

In this universe of law and order, of uniformity and continuity, a "miracle," in the sense of a capricious violation of law, is unthinkable. No intelligent Christian will ever ask God to break a law of Nature for him. We expect God to reveal Himself in and through Nature. To be sure, it may be in a way of which we have had no previous experience; to deny that possibility is to deny to God that freedom of initiative which we claim for ourselves. We may, however, be confident that God never works irrationally, capriciously, or lawlessly. We could not live in a world without a basal uniformity of law. Without it we could have no sciences; we could never understand Nature nor know what to expect from her; we could never learn by our experiences; we could have no inducement to labor. In a world of constant Divine intervention we could develop neither intelligence nor character.

Too long have we been expecting God to reveal Himself in the abnormal and the exceptional. Now we must see Him in the normal, the orderly, the ra-

LET US NOT EXPECT MIRACLES

tional, and become students of His methods of working.

There are many Christians today who cannot see God in an ordinary recovery from sickness. They even distinguish between "medical" and "mental" and "spiritual" healings as if in each class there were a different curative agency at work, whereas the truth is that all healings are due to the activity of Infinite Creative Life, and therefore every cure is a "spiritual healing."

We have been prone to find God only in the instantaneous and the spectacular. If need be, we must train our minds to see God in the gradual and the ordinary. Every recovery from illness is the result of obedience to law. There are no healings that are miraculous, and we must not expect them. Far better is it for one to depend upon the uniformity of law, even though our knowledge is but small, than to rely upon the caprice of a God whose ways are unintelligible and undependable. Now we may become students of all the laws governing our minds and bodies, and we may learn that prayer is an art, and that faith has its technique.

As we trust a law of Nature, so Jesus trusted God; and because of His faith, the Infinite Energy was released in and through Him.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever.

Heb. 13:8.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.

James 1:17.

XXXI

TRUST IN GOD

Because personality is the highest thing we know, the highest thing of which we have experience, it is the least inadequate form under which to conceive of God. Indeed, He is the sole possessor of full and complete personality. In us, personality suggests idiosyncracies and limitations which we cannot think exist in God. In us, it is arbitrary, capricious, changeable, irrational, and finite, but in God it is perfect and infinite.

Unfortunately, we have been so dominated by an anthropomorphic sense of Divine Personality, that we have never gained an understanding of His steadfastness, the certainty that in the same circumstances He will always act in the same way. We have been inclined to conceive of God after our own image and to imagine that He acts, as we often do, in an arbitrary and capricious manner.

Harold Anson is quite right in declaring that "the idea of personality, if rightly understood, by no means runs counter to the ideas of steadfastness, unity, and law.—The fickleness and waywardness of individuals is due, not to the possession of personality, but to the lack of it."

Divine Personality always acts with perfect consistency. His ways may be studied and understood. We may learn how to coöperate with Him with a certain assurance as to the results.

Trust in a personal God is akin to the modern man's belief in the certainty of the operation of natural law. He knows that Nature does not work irrationally or spasmodically. Nothing in the natural world is subject to caprice. A thing is not one thing today and

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another thing tomorrow. If water runs down hill in America, so it will in Asia. Nature is intelligible and trustworthy.

What we have recognized on the physical plane, we must see on the spiritual plane. We live in a universe of law. The ways of Infinite Personality are the laws of the universe which may be studied, understood, and obeyed.

A gardener can not make the plants to grow, but he can supply the proper conditions of growth. There are laws governing the growth of plants which he must study and obey. He can trust life to grow, with neither uncertainty nor anxiety about the results, if the laws are followed.

The engineer who bridges a river or tunnels a mountain can trust in the laws of gravitation, chemical affinity, cohesion, and other laws of Nature. He knows that if he fulfills the conditions, the forces of Nature will then work with absolute certainty and dependability.

There are conditions that we must supply for the operation of Creative Life and Energy. When we do this, the results are certain and sure—the health of mind and body, the conquest of all evil, “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding” (Phil. 4:7).

Are we trusting Infinite Personality with the same simple and sure confidence that characterizes the scientist’s or engineer’s trust in the laws of Nature?

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

Rom. 8:31.

EXAMINING THE SCRIPTURES DAILY

"Neither vision nor ecstasy, neither voice from heaven nor bodeful dream, has pointed the way of salvation to me. I owe my enlightenment quite simply to the reading of a book—the book, the Bible. He who hast lost his God may find Him again in this volume, and he who has never known Him will there be met by the breath of the Divine word."¹

The Bible is becoming a new book to multitudes of people. They have discarded the false theory of verbal inspiration; they no longer think of it as inerrant and self-interpreting; they do not expect to find in it a system of doctrine nor a code of ethics authoritative over their minds and consciences; it is far from infallible in scientific and historical matters; but it is being read with growing interest and respect. As the result of years of historical and literary criticism, the Bible is now coming into its own.

For several generations the scholars have been trying, patiently and reverently, to understand the meaning and the purpose as well as the date and the authorship of the various documents which since the end of the fourth century have formed the Canon of the Bible. To these scholars we owe a great debt of gratitude.

The library which makes up what we call the Bible should be read as we read any other books, not in a literal, slavish fashion, but with discrimination. As Luther pointed out concerning the Old Testament, we will sometimes find in it "wood, hay, and stubble, and not always gold, silver, or diamonds," but the precious stones are there awaiting our discovery. If we expect

¹Heine.

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to find absolute truth in every word, "the direct utterance of the Most High," we will be disappointed. But read as the record of man's progressive groping after God, and as the record of God's progressive revelation of Himself to man, the Bible has permanent and incomparable value.

When men have studied it with reverence and open-mindedness, it has "led to the richest unfolding of their energies and to the deepest dedication to their ideals." In it, writers with a glowing, strong sense for God and righteousness, men of moral intensity and spiritual insight, have told of their religious experiences in language expressive of our perennial aspirations, our deepest yearnings, and our highest loyalties. It is of uneven merit and value, but read in the light of modern scholarship it remains the most invaluable record of man's consciousness of God. No other book in the world has so inspired men to nobler living, so summoned them to a life of faith, so awakened them to a sense of the higher values, so moulded their thought and assuaged their sorrows. It cannot be neglected by him who would know God. As well imagine a student of dramatic art neglecting the plays of Shakespeare, or a student of music disregarding the symphonies of Beethoven, as a man trying to live according to the principles of spiritual religion giving no earnest attention to the Bible.

Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so.

Acts 17:11-12.

JESUS NEEDED TO PRAY

It is hard to hold two truths in balance. The tendency is ever to stress one at the expense of the other. It is a danger that we have to bear in mind, particularly when we study the character and personality of Jesus.

Perhaps it is harder for those who have been brought up in the Church to believe in the humanity of Christ than in His divinity. We declare that He was human, but hardly dare really to believe it. We have a fear of asserting that His humanity was like ours. We have said so often that "to err is human" that His humanity seems utterly unique, unnatural, abnormal. It has seemed almost blasphemous to say that we can repeat and share His life, His work, and experience. He has been like a flower that grew one time in a rich man's garden, blossomed out in beauty such as was never seen, and then died, leaving no successor; or like a star that flamed across the blackness of a night and then disappeared, leaving only a memory of its glory.

Christianity comes to us as a mighty challenge to believe that He was naturally and normally human; that we are not yet truly human; that we are growing up into humanity; that we become human as we approach the image and likeness of Jesus Christ.

When we dare to say that Jesus was human, we see that He needed to pray. He, too, had His discouragements. He met with contumely and opposition. He had His sense of emptiness as well as that of fulness. He had His Gethsemanes and Calvaries as well as His Transfigurations and Triumphal Entries. He had His contacts with unbelief and hatred as well as with

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child-like faith and love. What sustained Him? How did He maintain His consciousness of Sonship?

The answer is found in His prayer-life. He took time from the valleys of human need to spend it upon the mountains with God. He had His own "Inner Chamber" in which He practiced the Divine Presence, in which He opened His whole nature to the Divine Inflow, in which He drew strength and health from the Infinite Source of all good. He Himself had to learn anew every morning the fact of His oneness with the Father. He had to look intently at the face of God and with the searching eyes of the Eternal upon Him to appraise anew the values of life. "He had to learn afresh upon the very cross that there is no such thing as a divine forsaking, though so often there seems to be."

To-day, in the midst of thronging duties, with the multiplicity of organizations clamoring for our support, with the reiterated insistence upon our *doing* things for God and humanity, we need to learn from the first Christian both the necessity of and the method of the realization of God in the silence of "The Inner Chamber." If Jesus needed this, if it was out of this communion with God that He drew the strength required for His great work with the sinful and the sick, can we live and work without it?

But so much the more went abroad the report concerning him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed of their infirmities. But he withdrew himself in the deserts, and prayed.

Luke 5:15-16.

XXXIV

WHAT SEEKEST THOU?

"One of the most remarkable facts in the modern history of man is the rediscovery of prayer. It is true that, in some sense, prayer is as old and universal as the human spirit, but its significance and scope vary for each age, and its inner secret must be won afresh and interpreted in the light of the ever-deepening knowledge of nature and life. To-day we are witnessing a spiritual reaction against the hard, if brilliant, materialistic philosophy of a generation ago."¹

Not even the wisest man can tell how prayer operates, but it would seem that the fact can not be disputed. Multitudes of people today, as in all generations, can testify that prayer is a power that produces results. William James declared that "energy which but for prayer would be bound is by prayer set free and operates in some part, be it objective or subjective, of the world of experienced phenomena or facts."

Prayer has had a long history "from the efforts of savage man to bend the will of higher powers by magical incantations to the silence of the mystic who would lose his own self-centered being in the vision of the Eternal." In all ages petition has been one of its essential elements.

We sing in one of our well-known hymns, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed." It is the offering of our desires to the Infinite Personality who we believe can and does hear us, and who is able to respond and make full provision for all our needs. As conscious, individualized centers of the Creative Life and Energy, we are utterly dependent upon Him for strength and wisdom and love. To

¹McComb.

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whom else shall we go, surrounded as we always are with dangers, difficulties, and perplexities? Petition is not the whole of prayer, not the primary element, but it is a legitimate and inevitable part.

Today many of us are learning anew to go to God and with child-like faith tell Him about the needs of our lives. Not only have all the religious geniuses, the saints, had this habit; it was the rule of the Master who was the perfect embodiment and expression of the Divine Spirit. Jesus prayed for definite things, and taught us so to pray.

When we petition God for the fulfilment of our desires, we would not be "beggars," asking for something and giving nothing. We know the spiritual law that in order to receive we must give. In "The Inner Chamber," we abandon not only all known sins, but even ourselves, conceived of as mere individuals. We lose all to gain all. We die to live. We "seek first the Kingdom of God," knowing that all things really needed will be added unto us. In that surrender of self, in that consecration to His will, in that child-like confidence and faith in Infinite Love and Goodness, we tell to God our innermost desires. Then we realize the truth of Archbishop Trench's saying, "Prayer is not overcoming God's reluctance; it is laying hold of His highest willingness."

What seekest thou?

Gen. 37:15.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Matt.7:7-8.

THE PRAYER OF REALIZATION

Jesus is reported to have said, "All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24). Notice the tenses, "believe that ye receive them" *now*, "and ye *shall* have them."

Too long have we interpreted prayer only in the sense of petition, asking, beseeching, and oftentimes, in the spirit of a servile slave hardly daring to look up into his master's face. What a caricature of God such a prayer represents!

Phillips Brooks once said that "a prayer in its simplest definition is a wish turned Godward." Any strong desire that we have for God, whether that desire be expressed in words or not, is true petition.

The hard thing is to learn how to claim, to take what we have desired of God. We pray the same prayer day after day and month after month, and then we complain that our prayers are not answered. It may be that God in His Infinite Wisdom loves us too much to give us what we ask for, or it may be that we are in the position of a child always asking gifts of its parents, but never actually taking what they in their love have provided.

We have always known in the Church the prayer of "realization" or "appropriation." Now we need to stress it. In "The Inner Chamber" we should find time quietly to realize God and what He means to us and what He has provided for us out of His bounty. "Believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."

We shall find the use of strong Christian affirmations highly desirable, especially when we are relaxed physically and mentally. It is our unconscious or sub-

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conscious minds that need to be Christianized. If we are ill, we need to know that it is that part of our minds, working in a way unknown to us, that is in charge of the bodily processes. Our faith in the healing Creative Life needs therefore to be thrust down into the depths of our consciousness. When we are thoroughly relaxed, the unconscious mind is, as it were, on top. We can then strongly impress it, and thus make those right conditions which enable the healing power to work.

One of the essential conditions of effective prayer is the visualization of ourselves in possession of what we have prayed for. We should get that image as clear as possible, and then, when relaxed, stamp it indelibly upon the unconscious mind.

Our affirmations should never contain a word expressive of our present conditions. They should be positive, never negative. They should not express any faith in our own will-power. A true Christian affirmation gives expression to vivid faith in God, and to enthusiastic, joyous expectation that His Will will be fulfilled in us.

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

John 15:7.

This is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we asked of him.

1 John 5:14-15.

In the day that I called thou answeredst me.

Ps. 138:3.

XXXVI

MYSTICISM

What is mysticism? Let us note some definitions of modern writers:

"The immediate awareness of relation with God, direct and intimate consciousness of the Divine Presence."¹

"The attitude of mind in which all other relations are swallowed up in the relation of the soul to God."²

"Mysticism is the attempt to realize in thought and feeling the immanence of the temporal in the eternal and of the eternal in the temporal. An attempt to realize the presence of the living God in the soul and in nature—complete union with God."³

"A profound discontent with the obvious, a search for those more remote meanings which overflow the barriers of the common presuppositions and discourse of men."⁴

"Mysticism is . . . religion seeking to emancipate itself from the tyranny of external media. It is religion bringing the soul into the immediate presence of God."⁵

"Speaking generally, it is nothing less than a direct communication between God and the soul, independent of the bodily senses, but as direct, certain, and immediate as the bodily sensations are. Mystical experience is not knowing or thinking about God which is what is practiced in ordinary meditation; but actually knowing, contemplating, and being in conscious personal touch with God."⁶

"The thought most intensely present to the mystic

¹Rufus Jones. ²Edward Caird. ³Dean Inge. ⁴G. P. Adams.

⁵Cutten. ⁶Sharpe.

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is that of a supreme, all-pervading and indwelling Power in whom all things are one."¹

It would not be right to identify religion with mysticism. Whenever a man recognizes and appreciates a moral value, whenever he obeys his "heavenly vision," whenever he is allured by a high ideal, whenever he has a sense of obligation to a Higher Power, then he is religious; but religion at its height, in its purest and most intense form, is mysticism. Not all musicians can be Beethovens and Mozarts, and not all religious people can be great mystics, but we all are more or less capable of mysticism. We can all "practice the Presence of God"; we can all gain an immediate sense of Supreme Reality; we can all have that knowledge of God which is eternal life; we can all have direct, intimate consciousness of the spiritual; we can all have the deep satisfaction of coming into such relations with God that He "ceases to be an object and becomes an experience."

Today we have our captains of industry, our statesmen, artists, musicians, and mechanics, but the times call for great mystics, men who can point the way to that deep communion with God from which we come crying, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you" (I John 1:3). "We speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen" (John 3:11).

¹Pringle-Patteson.

*The eyes of all wait for thee;
And thou givest them their food in due season.
Thou openest thy hand,
And satisfiest the desire of every living thing.*

Ps. 145:15-16.

THE MARKS OF A MYSTIC

When we study the mystic in his rich experience with God, we note certain characteristics which set him apart from other religious men. What is at first striking is his absolute certainty—he *knows*! He may or may not have a rational interpretation of the universe, he may not even have tried to work out a philosophy, but his commerce with God has brought to him perfect assurance. He needs no argument to prove God; he has found Him in a living experience. When we ask him how he can be so sure of God, he simply replies, "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25).

It is also characteristic of all mystics that they cannot impart nor transfer to others their experience; they cannot express themselves. They struggle with language, but they can find no words to interpret to others what they have found in God. They can only say to us, "Come and see."

"Oh, could I tell, ye surely would believe it!

Oh, could I only say what I have seen,

How should I tell or how can ye receive it?

How, till He bringeth you where I have been?"

The religion of the mystic is always theocentric. God is both the center and the circumference of his life. He lives in God and for God. He knows nothing of the crass individualism of our day. He is one finite center of the Infinite Life of God, and exists that God may come to His full realization and expression in and through him. This truth has become such a burning conviction of his life that he no longer has any personal desires or ambitions. He lives that God may work

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through him, and by means of his personality further His loving purposes for all mankind.

Never does the mystic talk or even think about his talents or gifts, his powers or capacities. He has such a sense of oneness with the Eternal God that he feels that he owes his very life and being to Him whose indwelling constitutes his personality. He knows that the fine and great words that oftentimes spring from his lips, and the great deeds that oftentimes leap from his finger-tips are the words and deeds of Another, and to Him he gives all the credit of whatever work he may do for his fellow-men.

And he does work! He knows indeed the secret of a wise passivity; he does not begrudge the time he spends in "The Inner Chamber"; but from that intimate fellowship he goes out to an earnest activity. He glories in the fact that he is a fellow-worker with God, that he has his part to play, his work to do, his place to fill, in the age-long, continent-wide plans of God for the full establishment of His Kingdom on earth. He is a center of contagion, a missionary, a propagandist, a crowd-compeller, a creative personality. He must needs tell the world about God; he feels an inner imperative to share his experience with all men.

And we, too, may become mystics!

*He shall call upon me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble:
I will deliver him, and honor him.
With long life will I satisfy him,
And show him my salvation.*

Ps. 91:15-16.

THE HAPPINESS OF THE MYSTIC

Of all men the mystic has found the secret of happiness. While other men are trying to win pleasure in material things, heaping up worldly treasures, striving for honors and emoluments, wasting their lives in meaningless pursuits, he has found the secret of true, permanent, unalloyed happiness in homing himself in the Eternal Love.

Whereas with so many men and women, religion seems unnatural, something alien to their human nature, the mystic has penetrated far enough into the depths of his nature to understand that he is well fitted for religion, even that deep and rich religious experience that made the personality of Jesus so strong and masterful. The Christian Religion fits his nature as the key fits the lock, a fact that we clearly grasp whenever we dare to live it. Because he has such a sense of at-home-ness with God, the mystic through his religion knows how to be happy.

The religion of the mystic is positive, not negative. His salvation is *from* something, but preëminently, it is a salvation *to* something, even a salvation from sin to holiness, from weakness to strength, from sickness to health, from the natural man to the spiritual man, from Adam to Christ, from self to God! And in this positive religion, he finds the way from vexation and trouble to perfect happiness.

Of course the mystic takes his religion seriously. It motives the actions and words of every day, it inspires all his activities, it ministers to every need, it solves every problem. Therefore he takes time to read and study great books, to master spiritual laws, to train his thought-life, to bring every thought into

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subjection to Christ. He knows that Thomas Huxley spoke truly when he declared that "it does not take much of a man to be a Christian, but it takes all there is of him." And because his religion is such a serious concern to him, it becomes to him a source of genuine and all-pervading joy.

The true mystic of our times worships, serves, and lives with a happy God, a God who rejoices in the happiness of all His creation. He sees that God manifested in Jesus of Nazareth, the happiest man who ever lived, who Himself found that the innermost secret of a life of perennial joy is to forget self in disinterested service of humanity and in silent communion with His Maker. In "The Inner Chamber" that Jesus frequented in intimate fellowship, the mystic comes into contact with his happy God and shares with Him the joy, the inner serenity, the deep peace that passeth understanding. How he pities the worldling busied with petty, trivial interests, straining every nerve to find pleasure in the gratification of the sense-life! He knows that happiness is not found in circumstances, that it is never gained by him who seeks it directly, for its own sake, that it always is a by-product of a full and deep life of divine communion and human helpfulness.

And we ought to learn from the mystic the secret of a life of joy.

Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

Matt. 25:21.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control.

Gal. 5:22.

XXXIX
THE CHURCH
A.

The obvious fact is that we need the Church.¹ We need the Christian Sacraments. We need to company with people intent on the spiritual, prompted by Christian ideals, and anxious to further the Kingdom. Edward Rowland Sill expressed how we feel: "For my part I long to 'fall in' with somebody. This picket duty is monotonous. I hanker after a shoulder on this side and the other." Social worship is the imperative of our nature. It is easier for most of us to recognize the spiritual in the contagion of the social group. We may see the significance of our Lord's word: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). And we need some organized means of expressing our religious and social enthusiasm. It is all this that the Church means to us.

And yet, lovers of the Church, intending to be loyal to it, feeling under a tremendous debt of gratitude to it, we cannot but note how it is failing to meet the modern situation. It is its best friends who are its sternest critics. Here is Edward S. Woods saying: "It still remains broadly true that many men and women of our day are fumbling after Christ, with a dim hope that He will cure their ills and right their wrongs, and yet somehow or other they fail to find Him in the Churches. They feel, and not, it must be confessed, without some reason, that there is some indefinable discrepancy between that fresh and vital

¹The word "Church" is used here and elsewhere in its widest sense as denoting organized Christianity generally.

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thing which Jesus brought men at the first and the modern, official institution which functions under the Christian name, between the Christ of Galilee and the creeds which tame and tabulate all He stood for, between His first adventurous followers and their mild successors of today, whose chief activity seems to be to sit in pews on Sundays. The rigid traditions from an obscure and ancient past, the crystallized conventions of ecclesiastical thought and language, the prayers and liturgies irrelevant to modern life, the flood of talk and the tiny tricle of deeds, the inconsistencies, the aloofness of Church officials and often of Church members—all these things conspire to create in the mind of the onlooker, even of the sympathetic onlooker, that what is mostly wrong with the Church is a *grave want of reality.*"

The Archbishop of York has recently given expression to his judgment: "Men want a true religion as never before—that is its hope. They do not find it in the Church—that is its trouble.—While religion attracts, the Church repels.—To many men and women, especially the younger ones, the Church is not a witness to the truth of its Gospel, but it is, in its divisions, its dulness, its unreality, an obstacle, a stone of stumbling, an offense."

It is only a friend, one who is sharing its life and work, who can utter helpful and constructive criticisms of the modern Church. It is we who must take such criticisms to heart.

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Acts 2:42.

XL

THE CHURCH

B.

The Church must expect to be rebuked when it is weak and disloyal to its own ideals. But when it is attacked, we must take the criticism to ourselves. It is not merely the official leaders, but we, the rank and file of its members, who make up the Church.

If the Church suffers from triviality, from a lack of deep earnestness, if it tends to become "a social club with a religious atmosphere," if, at times, it seems to worship money, to trust in material success, is it not our fault?

If the Church is characterized by artificiality, retaining language no longer "understood of the people," content with meaningless, if not positively untrue, phrases, and with outworn forms and ceremonies, are not we to be condemned?

If the Church, in the presence of gigantic evils in society, is too cowardly to speak the burning truth to vested interests, if it caters to the rich and proud, if it places men in official positions whose chief recommendation is that they are "safe men," are not we to blame?

It is we who must make the Church what God desires and expects it to be. However human and fallible it is, the Church is "the body of Christ," "the extension of the Incarnation," the means of His activity and self-expression. We can not imagine how His cause can be advanced, how His type of religion can be spread, how His ethical idealism can be propagated, how the world can be made into a vast and true brotherhood, unless it is by the Church.

Let us hold a high ideal of the Church of Christ.

THE CHURCH

It is to teach the whole Gospel of Christ, never slighting nor neglecting any element of it, applying His principles both to the individual and to society. Its task is to make God real to men, to relate religion to every problem of daily life, and to send them forth charged with a noble social enthusiasm, ready to give all, and to risk all, that life may be made sweeter and nobler and larger and happier for all men. The Church carries a great responsibility to be true to its Lord and Master. It must not compromise with the world, it must not accept the dictation of corporate interests, it must be willing, if need be, to give up all its possessions, all that it is and hopes to be, that God may be glorified and His cause come to final success. It must be willing to have it said: "The Church saved others; itself it could not save."

Without denying the evil and weakness of the Church, let us refuse to let our minds dwell on that side. Let us be intent on the ideal, the divine side. Only he who can image "a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing," but "holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27), can help the Church do a true and constructive work for the Kingdom of God.

Christ loved the church, and gave himself up for it.
Gal. 5:25.

The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

1 Tim. 3:15.

He gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Eph. 1:22-23.

XLI

THE DEBT OF STRENGTH

St. Paul, in writing to the Christians at Rome, confessed that he was in debt. "I am a debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish" (Rom. 1:14).

Naturally we ask, "To whom was he in debt?" We could understand if he said that he was indebted to his parents, to his teachers, especially Gamaliel, to the Jewish race and its great men, Moses, Isaiah, Elijah and Hosea. But he made no mention of any of them.

He said that he was in debt to the Greeks but there is no indication that their philosophy or art or religion made any impression upon him. He mentioned the Barbarians of the great Gentile world but made no statement of any benefit or advantage coming to him. We can see that he and all men are in debt to the wise but we do not understand when he also includes the foolish.

Our mystification is complete when we consider how he put others under obligation to him. What a debt the Church owes to the great Apostle!

But neither St. Paul nor any other gallant, valorous soul ever speaks of such a debt. Neither he nor Livingstone, neither Florence Nightingale nor Abraham Lincoln, entertained such a thought.

We must get away from all worldly conceptions of the debt that weakness owes to strength, poverty to wealth, ignorance to wisdom, wretchedness to happiness. Christianity involves a reversal of consciousness, a transformation of values, a reversal of ideas and ideals. St. Paul had grasped the great spiritual truth that fulness is always in debt to want, joy to misery, riches to indigence, holiness to sin, health to

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sickness. He had what others did not have, and, because he had, he was in debt to those who had not, Greeks and Barbarians, wise and foolish.

St. Paul never got that idea of debt from nature where only the fit survive, where the strong batten on the weak, nor did he gain it from his contemporaries, Jews or Gentiles. He learned it from the study of that strong, masterful Son of God and Son of Man who, being rich, for our sakes became poor, the perfect exemplification of His own word, "He that loseth his life shall find it," the perfect expression of that Infinite Love ever out-going, ever self-communicative and self-sacrificing. Love is always in debt! Love struggles to the utmost to pay that debt!

We who have dwelt in "The Inner Chamber" must discharge our debt, not because we have received something for which we must pay a fair exchange but because we have what others do not have. Not in proportion to our poverty but in proportion to our wealth and our possessions are we in debt.

Men and women and children all about us need holiness and happiness and health. We owe that to them. There is but one way to discharge our debt; it is by laying our all, life itself, upon the altar of humanity's need. Really to do that is to live after the manner of Jesus Christ and His follower, St. Paul.

Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate.

I Tim. 6:17-18.

CO-WORKERS WITH GOD

A group of monks sat around a winter's fire in a monastery years ago discussing the verses in the Bible that had meant the most to them. Finally it came the turn of a young man, a novice, to speak. He remarked that to him the most significant verse in all the Scriptures was one in the Revelation of St. John the Divine: "His servants shall serve Him." It is needless to say that such a man would be heard from! It was Thomas A' Kempis, later the author of one of the world's greatest devotional classics, "The Imitation of Christ."

Sir Oliver Lodge, in similar vein, once answered the question, "Why are we here?" with the word, "We are here to help God!"

It is an assumption on the part of some that God would not have been good if He had placed us in an imperfect world. Quite the contrary may be asserted. What would have been man's task, what means could he have found for his own development, in a finished world?

Nor is it true that God made the world perfect, and man, by his sinful interference, made it imperfect and ugly.

The obvious fact is that creation is in process, and we are living in an imperfect world because it is not yet finished. God, in His wisdom and goodness, has left to men, conscious centers of His manifestation, the responsibility of being finite creators, that, together with Him, we may bring the world to that perfection that has ever been the goal before the Divine Mind. It was with this thought that Jesus bade His

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disciples to pray, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Life, infinite or finite, is always creative. The material with which Life works is in no case inherently evil. "God made all things good." Matter is sacred as the instrument, the sacrament of Spirit. Having not absolute but inferior and partial reality, it is plastic to spirit. And matter is being gradually mastered by Life, and the end is certain, a Kingdom of Goodness, Truth, and Beauty fully established on earth.

We are not here to help ourselves. Religion is not to be considered as a means by which we can further our aims and desires. Religion is for God! "We are here to help God." We, like Jesus, "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

The challenge of God to our generation is not to a life of mere ease and comfort. H. G. Wells has told us that "God is not a spiritual troubadour, wooing men and women to no purpose; God goes through the world like drums and fifes and flags, calling for recruits along the street."

We may not hold back from arduous tasks and large enterprises because we are unprepared and imperfect. Happily, His work does not wait to be done by fully trained and perfect men. He calls us just as we are, knowing that as we serve we shall be perfected. When we gladly accept the commission to be fellow-workers with Him, then a fundamental spiritual law comes into operation and "all things (are) added unto" us—all things that we need for effective service.

We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

John 9:4.

XLIII

THE SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Of all men, one who knows how to use "The Inner Chamber" will have a true social consciousness.

We must affirm of others what we claim for ourselves. We all share the Life of the Infinite; we are all begotten of God; we are all His children; every man of every race, color, and condition is of infinite worth.

The human race is not an aggregation of independent, exclusive individuals. We are bound up in a unity of life, a social organism, each with his own sacred, inviolable personality, each with his rights and corresponding obligations.

It is this high conception of the value of every personality, this reverence for human beings as such, that marks the great difference between the ancient and modern world, and that lies at the root of the social consciousness of today. It was inherent in the Gospel of Jesus. To Him, every human soul was precious in the eyes of God. As Harnack said, "Jesus Christ was the first to bring the value of every human soul to light, and what He did no one can any more undo."

We may not forget that there are great questions that are being asked to-day which must be answered if we prevent the world from sinking into the chaos of barbarism: How shall we interpret Christian principles in economic, industrial, and social terms? What does it mean to "follow Christ" in this modern age when social relationships are so intricate and complicated? How shall men express good-will in industry? What does the Golden Rule mean to both employer and employee, to both capital and labor? Can the modern industrial system be mended, or must

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it be ended? What are the Christian principles relating to recreation and amusements, to the acquiring and spending of money? What is a Christian nation? How can we apply the same ethical standards to nations that we are demanding of individuals?

It is such questions that men are asking to-day of the Church of Christ. There are many men who are anxious to be Christians on week-days as on Sundays, in their offices and factories as in their Churches, but they say that they do not know how! They want to "follow Christ" in business and politics, but they declare that they do not know what this involves! And it is the Christian laymen of America who can and must answer such questions and solve such problems.

We see the disintegration of modern society, the cleavage between the classes, the petty rivalries and jealousies of the Churches, the antagonisms of the nations, and we long for strong, Christ-like men who will interpret Him to our generation, so that His dream may be realized, and a universal brotherhood be set up on earth. Why can not we be such men?

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.

Matt. 6:10.

Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him that fell among the robbers? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

Luke 10:36-37.

He made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth.

Acts 17:26.

XLIV

LET ALL BE DONE IN LOVE

When we say that God is Love we mean that the Absolute Reality, the Personal, Creative Life-Force is essentially loving, that is, self-sacrificing, self-communicating. God is never thinking about Himself; He actually lives in His creation; He is ever pouring the fulness of His Being into all that He has made according to its capacity to receive and express Him.

Love is the law of our being as it is the law of God's being. We were made to love as we were made to be loved, and we are never our true selves until we lose ourselves in a great passion for God and His Kingdom. Even the body illustrates the fact that love is the basic law, for the more loving the mind, the more healthful and normal the body. The body was made for a loving mind.

Often have we thought of the Cross of Christ, and there realized the amazing love of the Infinite, but

"The cross on Golgotha will never save thy soul;
The cross in thine own heart alone can make thee whole."

Oftentimes we put the symbol of the Cross on our Churches and above our altars, and why? To proclaim to all the world that Christ in His life and death revealed infinite Love! But it should also announce to the community that the people who worship there have accepted the law of love as fundamental in their lives, that they are obeying it in their homes and clubs and schools and offices and factories and voting-booths. It should mean that they worship Love as the highest value, that they have firm conviction that it is the secret of happiness and the way to health, that

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through love personality is enriched, vitality heightened, social relations harmonized, industry rejuvenated, and the whole nation made prosperous. The Cross on the Church we attend is the proclamation to the world that we serve the God of Love whom Jesus revealed, and that we have adopted His way of life.

All could be done in love if we would only see men as God sees them. We have been so trained in the past to see evil that when we say, "Thou God seest me," we mean that He sees evil in us. But God sees more deeply and truly than we see. He loves us and all men because we are worthy of His love, are members of His family, and are "partakers of His divine nature." No man or woman or child on this globe is in His eyes utterly unlovely or hopeless. He does not blind His eyes to the evil, but He is intent on the good. He sees His own life in us, His own image stamped upon us. He glories in our high capacities and rejoices in our noble powers. If we would but train ourselves to see all men as He sees them we would love them as He loves them, and that love begotten of God would redeem and irradiate their lives as well as our own. Maeterlinck had a true word, "The true sage is not he who sees but who, seeing the furthest, has the deepest love for mankind." We, too, may learn to do all things in love.

Let all that ye do be done in love.

I Cor. 16:14.

And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness.

Col. 3:14.

XLV

THE ROYAL LAW

We live in a universe that is friendly and helpful to a loving man, a man who has accepted the ideal of service. That is obvious because love never degrades nor makes worse. There never has been an instance of a man giving himself to disinterested service of God and his fellow-men who found that such service caused him to deteriorate in character or to suffer moral loss.

This means that the universe, the system of things, the nature of reality, is on the side of the righteous man. It may be that situations have arisen and will arise when such a man meets with outward misfortune (though in the long run, "All things work together for good" to him), yet the good that he has done has always ennobled and enhanced his personality. It is the law that knows no exceptions and that works with absolute certainty. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). There is in operation in this world a Power which in Its working means character, happiness, and health to him whose life is motivated by love.

But selfishness always degrades, and no one was ever the better in himself by living such a life. Our vitality is lowered by every selfish day we live, but love makes for fulness of life, for self-realization, and completeness.

We wait for no future "Judgment Day" to reap the reward or to suffer the punishment for the way we live. Love enriches at once! To be a loving, helpful person is to have a purified and enhanced personality; to sin, to be an exclusive, selfish person, is to go down at once in the scale of being, is to deteriorate. The pen-

THE ROYAL LAW

alty of being selfish is greater selfishness; the reward of being loving is greater love. The results of wrong thinking and doing are not penalties imposed upon us by a higher and stronger authority; they are the natural, uniform, and inevitable fruitage of what we think and do.

Love is the one supreme law embracing and comprehending all other laws of the spiritual world. It is "the fulfilment of the whole law." The "commandments" are not arbitrarily imposed upon us; they are the inexorable laws of our own being, and are to be accepted as we accept the laws of mathematics. The Cross is not only the symbol of what is eternally true of God; it is the symbol of what is eternally true of ourselves.

Love is the only key that unlocks the storehouse of God's abundance. We must let this truth be driven into our consciousness. The prayer of a loveless life is nothing but meaningless words, but "the prayer of a righteous man availeth much." When we frankly and honestly accept the law of love and give it our glad obedience, good will flow to us from all quarters.

"He that abideth in love abideth in God." When we are the most self-forgetting and loving, then are we the most conscious of the Presence of God. "If I can put some touches of a rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman, then I feel that I have walked with God."

Howbeit if ye fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well.

James 2:8.

XLVI

LAW HAS NO EXCEPTIONS

The modern scientist has familiarized us with the truth that this is a rational world, in which laws have no exceptions. It is the declaration of our Christian philosophy that all natural laws are the forms or manifestations on the physical plane of those deeper, more fundamental spiritual laws of which love is the chief. To us, love is the basic law of all reality, and there is no portion of human life or activity outside of its domain. Yet it is notorious how men have been prone to departmentalize their lives, assigning to religion a sphere here and there, but excluding it from huge tracts of human interests. In their passion for anti-thesis men have for centuries set the spiritual over against the natural, spirit over against matter, the sacred over against the secular, and the divine over against the human; but such strong contrasts and sharp distinctions are wholly imaginary.

President H. C. King says that "it is the glory of religion not to be set apart from life, but to permeate it powerfully." But to what an extent have men banished God to the Churches, and identified religion with Sundays and dimly-lighted buildings, Gothic architecture, stained glass windows, choirs and cloisters, while in the market-place and club, office and factory, school and farm, they have lived their lives and busied themselves with a thousand interests as if God were not! The result is today that in the minds of multitudes there is a grotesque irrelevance of religion to actual life. Men speak and act as if Christian principles were inapplicable to whole areas of human need, forgetting that a true

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religion must express itself in all aspects of human life and activity.

Lord Palmerston two generations ago, was heard muttering to himself when coming out of an English Church after hearing a strong and frank sermon, "Things have come to a pretty pass when religion is allowed to invade the sphere of private life." There is no sphere of public or private life that is outside the circle of divine law. God demands a place both in the center and throughout the circumference of our lives, seeking to irradiate and transmute every phase and detail. There can be no severance between the sacred and the secular, between the spiritual and the natural, for nothing in this wide world is alien to religion. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). Either religion must be allowed to permeate all life or it has no value and no meaning to us.

We cannot stay in "The Inner Chamber" of prayer and meditation with only selfish desires for our own lives. Outside there is human need—sin, sickness, and suffering. We must go out to a life of selfless, disinterested service to God and all humanity, in both public and private life. "All true life is incompatible with any form of selfishness." Nothing but evil is outside the Kingdom of God. The "Royal Law" is all-prevailing; it has no exceptions.

Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Matt. 22:36-40.

XLVII

LOVE IS THE NEW COMMANDMENT

Companionship with God every day in "The Inner Chamber" is a necessity to every soul, but it does not preclude the life of service to humanity outside its doors. In that intimate communion we know the profound truth that Browning expressed:

"Take all in a word; the truth in God's breast
Lies trace for trace upon ours impressed;
Though He is so bright, and we are so dim,
We are made in His image to witness Him."

The only way to "witness Him" is "to walk in love, and to live by the binding law of fellowship." We are Christians in proportion as we do that!

When we permit the scales of illusion to drop from our eyes, we know that our so-called civilization is to a great degree a hollow sham; it is largely founded on a monstrous lie, namely, that man is incurably evil, and that, therefore, the law of love is irrelevant to great territories of human interests and activities. Multitudes of people are being denied the opportunity of a full and rich life. What you and I enjoy as ordinary privileges are to throngs of God's children unattainable dreams. What could we do if constantly harassed by the fear of non-employment, of an old age of poverty and neglect, if our earnings were barely sufficient to buy food and clothing and shelter, if we were shut off from the great world of joy and truth and beauty? Yet that is the state of thousands of people for whom Christ died, for whom Infinite Tenderness yearns! Can we be content in seeking happiness and health for our own sake? Will we not go out of "The Inner Chamber" of prayer and meditation intent

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on contributing our part in making life worth living for these neglected sons of God? All men, all women, all children, in all countries, are centers of Infinite, Creative Life and they have a God-conferred right to all the opportunities and privileges that are ours. They have the right to live the rich, full life of God's children, but it is just that right that modern social and industrial conditions too often deny them. If this means nothing to us, the recollection of their wrongs and miseries will sooner or later wreck the peace and devastate the joy of that "Inner Chamber" where we have loved to meet God and commune with Him on terms of intimate comradeship. God loves all men as He loves us, and fellowship with Him is conditioned on our acceptance of the law of service expressed to all men, regardless of social and cultural distinctions.

"Love ever gives—forgives—outlives—
And ever stands with open hands,
And while it lives—it gives,
For this is Love's prerogative—
To give—and give—and give."

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

John 13:34.

He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in the darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in the darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes.

I John 2:9-11.

XLVIII

LOVE EXPRESSED IN SACRIFICIAL SERVICE

In Christ we see the glory of God. In what does that glory consist? Not in the possession of omnipotence, omniscience, or omnipresence—these could not be revealed in a human personality. Without thinking, we have supposed that Christ left the glory of Heaven when born to an earthly life and returned to that glory after the Resurrection. That was not the view of the beloved disciple who knew Him best. "The Word became flesh—and we beheld His glory" (John 1:14). "If we are to believe that in Christ we see the Father, we must go further and say with St. John that the self-humbling and self-emptying and the self-forgetting are themselves part of the eternal glory of God. There was no leaving of Heaven when He came on earth."¹

We see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And Jesus knew that it was the glory of love. And this was what He commended to His disciples and all who would follow Him. He would have them live in love and grow in the capacity of love. He Himself lived a life and died a death of absolute selflessness, and thus revealed what is eternal in the Godhead. The glory of the Absolute Reality of the universe is the glory of self-sacrificing love. The Cross is the revelation of the perfect and complete self-surrender of God in Christ. "The Divine Life is the Christ-Life; Heaven is the Cross."

It is to the glory of a loving life that He summons us. For human as well as divine life there is no other glory. It is hard at first to understand this, so well trained have we been in the belief that the great man is the man of strongest self-assertion. "The natural

¹William Temple.

LOVE EXPRESSED IN SACRIFICIAL SERVICE

man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him" (1 Cor. 3:14). Jesus knew the secret of true greatness and expressed it in immortal words: "Whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister" (Mark 10:43). The glory of a man, made in the image and likeness of God, is the glory of love, of disinterested, self-sacrificing service for the good of men.

If God is Omnipotent Love, if we and all men are centers of His life, made in His likeness, then the day will come on this planet when all men will hear the summons and live a life of selfless love, all human action will be motivated by the ideal of service, all industry will be Christianized, all evils will be destroyed, the Kingdom of God will be fully established, and His will "be done on earth as it is in heaven."

"Is it a dream? Let us shape it to action,
Mighty with truth's irresistible strength,
Bold with the courage which fears no detraction,
Shall we not climb to the vision at length?

Ever the dream-light grows clearer and finer,
Ever the stars draw us up from the sod,
Up to the light of the glory diviner,
Nearer the infinite glory of God."

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not abideth in death.

I John 3:14.

Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good.

I Cor. 10:24.

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Gal. 6:2.

XLIX

THE FAITH OF CHRIST

Many Christians have trouble with the assertion that Jesus was "the first Christian," and that therefore we are to cultivate His faith, His viewpoint, His consciousness, His ethical idealism, His religion.

In spite of both Gospels and historic creeds, the humanity of Jesus has been almost forgotten by the Church. The Christians of the first four centuries were dominated by the idea of an absolute chasm between the divine and the human. In their tradition, inherited from both Greek philosophy and Judaism, divine and human are distinct kinds of being, and therefore an impassable gulf is fixed between God and man. How this gulf could be bridged, how God could be in Christ, was the question that absorbed the minds of the theologians of the early centuries.

Today we are compelled to accept a thorough-going Immanence and to declare that God is manifested in all that is, in all grades of reality, in all personalities, but supremely in Christ. He was a sinless man perfectly revealing the character of God.

It is for us to study His mind and faith and to adopt His purposes and ideals, His scale of values, as our own. As St. Paul said, He was "the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). The writer of the Fourth Gospel affirmed that "as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). "The works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do" (John 14:12). "We may not refuse to grant recognition to the divinity living in many a saint and prophet; there is no honor to Christ in setting Him utterly apart from His brethren."

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We are living in the life of God, there is a spark at least of divinity in us all, and no goal less than "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" should or can satisfy us.

"Was Christ a man like us? Ah, let us try
If we then too can be such men as He."

No one can enter into the spiritual experience of Jesus at His baptism by John, but tradition asserts that in it He became conscious of His mission. From it He emerged confident that He was the long-expected Messiah destined to inaugurate the New Age.

His mission was unique; we can not share it with Him; but His faith we can repeat. He experienced God vividly and enjoyed the closest and tenderest relations with Him. We can cultivate His sense of divine companionship; we can adopt His way of life; we can emulate His love, His compassion, His purity of intention, His devotion to the ideal of perfection. In proportion to our success in disciplining our consciousness to be like His, the Infinite, Creative Life will surge into and through us for the blessing of both ourselves and all humanity.

For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you. John 13:15.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matt. 11:29.

Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. Matt. 16:24.

L

FAITH IN CHRIST

We can not be content with seeking the faith of Christ; we must add to that a faith in Christ. After He passed from the vision of men, it was inevitable that the early Christians should endeavor to interpret His life and mission. We may cry, "Back to Christ," but we cannot get along without a reasonable faith in Him. It is true that He did not talk about Himself, nor did He give us a doctrine of His own nature, but His followers were bound to do so. The early Christians were devoted to Him as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6), and ever since it has been true that "Christianity is the religion of discipleship to Jesus."¹

It is well that the Christian religion has been thus identified with an historical character. It is hard to grasp abstract truths about God and humanity; we need something concrete and visible; we need to see God incarnated in a man. Fortunately Christianity does not limit the divine incarnation to one man however great; but the divinity we see in all men came to its fullest revelation in Jesus of Nazareth. To Him we may give a personal loyalty of which no other is worthy.

"No nobler feeling than this of admiration for one higher than himself dwells in the breast of man. It is to this hour, and at all hours, the vivifying influence in man's life. Religions I find stand upon it; not Paganism only, but far higher and truer religions,—all religion hitherto known. Hero-worship, heartfelt prostrate admiration, submission, burning, boundless,

¹MacIntosh.

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for a noblest godlike Form of Man—is not this the germ of Christianity itself?”¹

It is this which distinguishes the Christian religion from all others—“the supreme position it gives to a personality and a personal ideal once actually incarnated in terms of human life and character, and the central emphasis it places upon identification with the spirit of the Master as the determinant of conduct in the professed disciple.”

The personality of Jesus has steadily dominated the religious consciousness of men. We note in the Gospels the extraordinary impression made upon His intimates; it has been so with all who have come under His influence. After we study the lives of all the saints and seers, teachers and prophets, He remains the greatest of them all, the paragon of human excellence, the exemplar of God’s will for all men.

To have faith in Him means nothing less than to accept Him as Lord and Master, to live as He lived, to take up our cross and follow Him. “A Christian is any one who is consciously a follower of Christ, who looks to Christ as his pattern and guide, and sincerely tries to live the Christ-life—the life of self-surrender and purity and love, the life that aims not to be ministered unto but to minister—in the midst of a selfish and sensual world.”²

¹Carlyle. ²Drake.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Matt. 7:21.

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Luke 6:46.

GOD CAN BE EXPERIENCED

Religion is more than a theory, a guess, a speculation, more than the conclusion of an argument. By thinking we can make God a probability; but only by experience can we make Him a certainty.

No non-religious man can testify as to the reality or validity of religion—he is only an observer. He has no more right to an opinion than a blind man has a right to approve or disapprove of a Rembrandt or a Corot. He has not lived the life! He does not know the real thing at all, “seeing that he has never known its splendours invade the soul.”

Religion is a stupendous and daring adventure, and only he who has embarked upon it knows anything about it. The only method we can use with the non-religious is that which Philip adopted to convince Nathanael, “Come and see!” However earnest we may be in our desire to tell another about the wonderful things that have come to us, about the way God has become real to us, we are finally forced to say, “The only way you will know about it is to experience it for yourself.”

“Whoso hath felt the Spirit of the Highest
 Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny;
 Yea with one voice, O world, tho’ thou deniest,
 Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.”

Religion in a real sense is a private concern. No other man can think about God for us, nor trust Him, nor appraise values, nor adopt will-attitudes for us. We must do it in our own way; no other can act as our substitute. Our religion is our own private and exclusive affair. There are questions that we cannot

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evade, answers to which we must find: "Who or what is God? Who am I and why do I live? What is matter in itself and in relation to Spirit? What is evil and how can it be overcome? Does my theory of the world work? Is it being verified by a deeper study of all the facts?" We cannot dismiss such questions and maintain our intellectual integrity; we must find answers to them that satisfy our reason. But when we have done this, we may not yet be religious; we may be only philosophers or theologians. We are religious only when we actually experience and know God in our own way.

Our experience does not prove the truth of our theory; that must stand on its own inherent reasonableness. But experience must confirm the theory. And the final proof of religious experience is pragmatic. What does it do? What contribution does it make to the fulness and richness of life? What activities does it inspire? What effect does it have upon happiness and health? Does it give effective aid in destroying evil and subjugating matter? Only in this way can we test the validity of our experience.

Is our religion a living experience that grows deeper and richer as we advance in understanding?

Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

John 1:45-45.

Then thou shalt see and be radiant, and thy heart shall thrill and be enlarged.

Isa. 60:5.

THE DANGER OF VIVID EXPERIENCES

St. Peter illustrated a danger that faces every one who frequents "The Inner Chamber" when, on the Mount, he witnessed the transfiguration of the body of Christ. What an experience was his! The conflicts and problems and temptations of the days before were forgotten as he was absorbed in the vivid, emotional experience of seeing the transformation of the physical body of His Master. How plastic matter became! It was not destroyed; it revealed how sacramental it always is. It became almost transparent—a thin veil of the spirit. In that hour the spiritual became real to the disciple. Never again did he doubt that reality.

It is no wonder that he wished to stay there, wrapped up in that thrilling experience. It is no wonder that he cried: "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah" (Mark 9:3). He would have tarried there forever!

If his wish had been granted, he would have been sorely disappointed. No emotional experience can be lasting—it is but for a moment, and then it is gone. And its danger is that religion tends to become a personal luxury.

Jesus never intended "The Inner Chamber" to be a place of permanent abode. But what a temptation! When we grasp a great truth, it is easy to sit down with it and selfishly enjoy it. It acts like a tonic; it kindles our minds and illuminates the world; but, that truth is not ours! It is God's, it came from Him, and it belongs to all humanity! If there has come to us a new and grander vision of God, a fresh insight into the significance and worth of life lived in and for Him,

THE DANGER OF VIVID EXPERIENCES

if we have laid hold of Divine Energies, and know that our personalities are being greatened, our vital force enhanced, our happiness increased—what then? We must tell our message to the world, we must use every instrumentality available to give to struggling, baffled men and women what has been revealed to us. We may recall that reported word of Mazzini who, when he was told that a friend had become religious, said, “When I hear a man called ‘good’, I ask ‘whom then has he saved?’ ”

To be explicit—when we are enjoying our hour of commerce with God and the spiritual world, what do we think of child-labor in America, of the long hours of some women’s employment, of the men in soul-destroying piece-work in factories speeded up for mass-production? What do we think of strikes and lock-outs? What do we think of the nations in armed readiness to spring again at each other’s throats, to drown the hopes and aspirations of many peoples in a sea of blood and tears? Do these things mean nothing to us? Are they not challenging to us?

Of what real worth are our vivid experiences if they do not send us out to more hopeful and effective service for God and humanity?

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Cor. 15:58.

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.

Matt. 25:40.

STRENGTH FOR EVERY NEED

The King of Syria dispatched an army to capture Elisha who was at Dothan. When the servant of the prophet arose in the morning and saw the horses and chariots of the Syrian army encompassing the city, he cried in despair, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" Elisha answered, "Fear not; for they that are with us are more than they that are with them."

"And Elisha prayed, and said, 'Jehovah, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.' And Jehovah opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" (II Kings 6:17).

To be truly religious is to be conscious of the environing presence of God. It is to have one's eyes open to see what is unseen by the physical eye.

We must grasp the fact that the supplies for our need, the solutions for our problems, the answers to our questions are already at hand. We do not pray that a distant God may send assistance when we are in difficulties, but, rather, that we may see the resources that are already by our side. The horses and chariots of fire were there but the servant could not see them. What we desire and pray for is here waiting to be claimed and utilized. The true prayer for us is, "Lord, open my eyes that I may see!"

But that prayer cannot be granted unless we fulfil the conditions. The eyes of the worldly man or woman, intent on temporal and material things, never see spiritual powers. But when we deliberately abandon the world with its motives and ideals and values and definitely accept those of the Kingdom, then we may pray with confidence that our eyes may

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be opened to see the supplies for our need. God never abandons His fellow-worker.

“Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night,
Nor for the arrow that flieth by day;
For the pestilence that walketh in darkness,
Nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

A thousand shall fall at thy side,
And ten thousand at thy right hand;
But it shall not come nigh thee” (Ps. 91:5-7).

Yet we have gone on vaguely hoping, despairingly praying that God would relieve us in our embarrassment and succor us in our perplexity, and all the time we were sharing God’s life, and the storehouse was full to overflowing, and the door was open! It is this sense of ever-present abundance that must be cultivated. As Ruskin said, “It is not the weariness of mortality, but the strength of divinity, which we have to recognize.” Living in God, we must *know* that He does supply all our need—not some, but *all* our need, according, not to our weak faith, but to His immeasurable riches.

And my God shall supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Phil. 4:19.

*The eternal God is thy dwelling-place,
And underneath are the everlasting arms.*

Deut. 33:27.

And for his allowance, there was a continual allowance given him of the king, every day a portion, all the days of his life.

II Kings 25:30.

BEARING OUR OWN BURDENS

We like to place the responsibility of our lives upon others, to persuade them to bear the burden of crucial decisions. It is hard for us to repent of and to forsake sin. We shrink from the memory of the past and from the thought of the present. We would be glad to be spiritually minded, if we could but escape that decision of the will which a spiritual life demands. We would rejoice in living a life of faith if some one would believe for us. We know that we rest under self-imposed limitations, and we would be happy if some one secured for us the liberty of the sons of God.

When we are ill in mind or body, we would like to go to a "healer," or to a service full of excitement when an attempt is made to give public demonstrations of spiritual healing. We want some one to do for us what we are loath to do for ourselves. We forget that our Lord said to almost all who were healed, "Thy faith hath made thee whole" (Mark 5:34). But it is hard for us to face the fact of a failure in the inner life, an acquiescence in false beliefs, a lack of genuine trust in a living, present Saviour, an over-assertion of the self. It is far easier to go to a "healer" than to undertake a rigorous re-education and discipline of the thought-life, a thorough abandonment of self with all its claims and desires, an unqualified acceptance of the principles of the Kingdom, a simple but clear belief that Spirit is stronger than matter.

We must face the fact that no one can live our lives for us, and no one can bear our burdens. The greatest help that any one can offer us is not to take our burdens from us, but to show us how we can bear them without bitterness or complaining. We should

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not desire to put upon others the responsibility of thinking, and believing, and making decisions for us. How then could we grow? How could we develop strong personalities? We must learn to respect ourselves, our powers of thinking and feeling and acting. Is it not God that works in and through us? Because of His indwelling, have we not high capacities and noble powers? We do not need to carry around any sense of inferiority. All things are possible if we do not limit God by our morbid fears and our weak expectations.

"Give me understanding, and I shall live" (Ps. 119:144). Let us really know the truth about ourselves, comprehend the worth and meaning of life lived in and for God, and we shall have that fulness of life which Jesus shared with His disciples and with all since who have walked with Him. When we grasp the fact that the Creative Life has been individuated in us, that evil has no power over us except that which we allow, and that matter can not obstruct the Divine Will, we can dare to take up the burdens of life, and meet the emergencies of every day with a quiet mind and a serene spirit.

"God's own hand is pledged to guide me,
God's own strength my strength shall be;
I have God's own eye to watch me,
God's own ear to hear my prayer,
God's own word to give me orders,
God's own arm my loads to bear."

Each man shall bear his own burden. Gal. 6:5.

Each one of us shall give account of himself to God.
Rom. 14:12.

THE ABANDONMENT OF SELF

We have no life, no ability of our own, none that we have not received from God. "We are of God," "made in the image and likeness" of Him whose Infinite Life transcends, yet includes our own. We are always in union with God as the bay is with the ocean. We share the life of God as the bay shares the fulness of the ocean. When we know and realize this elemental truth, and draw from it the further truth that we have no work of our own, but that we, too, must be about our "Father's business," we are on the pathway to a life of plenty and security.

The vast trouble with us is that we think too much about ourselves, that we yearn and plan for our own increase, that we strain to further our own ambitions. Who are we to have plans and ambitions? We do not live separated, independent lives. We live in God, and God lives in us. The essence of sin is the desire for self-aggrandizement at the expense of others. The essence of holiness is self-forgetfulness in the service of others. We need to discipline our thought-life until the concerns of the self seem trivial, until a great loyalty absorbs all our energy in its mighty passion, until God is our All in All.

"He must increase, but I must decrease" until to myself I am nothing and He is everything. St. Theresa knew the secret when she spoke of herself as "fully awake as regards God, but wholly asleep as regards things of this world and in respect" of herself. So did the writer of *"The Cloud of Unknowing:"* "Mean God all, and all God, so that nought work in thy wit and in thy will, but only God."

If we would study our lives we would see how self-

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centered we have been, how selfish even our prayers have been, what an absurd place we have given to the I and the Me and the Mine! How could religion mean much to us? Let us learn the fundamental truth: we are conscious selves, personalities, we always will be ourselves and never will be absorbed into God with a loss of our individuality, but the more completely we expunge all thought of self from consciousness, and intensify our minds upon Him in whom we live and whose work we are to do, the greater will be our happiness, the more effective will be our work, and the sooner will we experience healing of mind and body.

In "The Inner Chamber" we must learn how to forget self in the joy of increasing intimacy with God; we must accept the fact that the religious life is a process of deepening surrender of all that pertains to the self. If we go there with our minds full of desires for the self, for material things and pleasures, for physical health and comfort, we shall find the Presence-Chamber empty; but if we commit ourselves wholly to God, "giving all for all and asking nothing in return, save that the will of God may be fulfilled in" us, He will meet with us and all good things will come from that sweet companionship.

He must increase, but I must decrease.

John 3:30.

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me; and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.

Gal. 2:20.

LVI
EFFACE YOURSELVES

"O world invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee.

. . .

"The angels keep their ancient places,
Turn but a stone, and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces
That miss the many splendoured thing."

Why are we missing it? What is it that we have lost? We have been told to work for Christ and His Kingdom; we have been urged to take our needs to God and to ask for their supply; we have been faithful attendants upon the services of the Church. What have we neglected, or been ignorant of, or indifferent to? Why do we not see the Divine Beauty and hear the Divine Harmony? William Blake cried: "What, when the sun rises, do you see? A round disc of fire, something like a guinea? Oh, no, no, I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host crying, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty." Why do we not see God in all things and all things in God? Why are our lives so drab, so impotent, so lacking in rich joy and fruitful peace?

"'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces!"

It is self that stands in the road preventing us from reaching the heights of spiritual attainment. Phillips Brooks knew that fact as he said: "Efface yourselves; and the only way to do it is to stand in the presence of God, and be so possessed with Him that

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there shall be no space or time for the intrusion of your own poor little personality." If an Episcopalian like Brooks could say that, listen to Martineau, a Unitarian: "Here we alight upon an interpretation of the doctrine of prudence characteristic of the Christian mystic—that self is the center and essence of all sin and the surrender of self the one condition of union with God. To have no wish, no claim, no reluctance to be taken hither and thither, but to yield oneself up as the organ of a higher spirit which disposes of us as may be fit, constitutes the mystic ideal of a perfect life."

We must learn with Emerson that "the way of life is wonderful; it is by abandonment." The abandonment of all known sin, the surrender of all the personal ambitions that sway the minds and hearts of men and women who care not for "the vision splendid", the laying on the altar of human service all that we are and all that we hope to be—this is the adamant and irreversible law of the Kingdom. It is the only way that we shall see and delight in "the many splendoured thing."

Ye shall call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.

Jer. 29:12-13.

*Blessed are they that keep his testimonies,
That seek him with the whole heart.*

Ps. 119:2.

I can of myself do nothing.

John 5:30.

LVII

THE MIND OF CHRIST

Religion is the most arresting, the most thrilling interest of man. It is the one factor of life absolutely indispensable to all men. Without it life lacks zest, vitality, the fulness of love and wisdom and power.

To be a Christian means to live in and for God after the manner of Jesus Christ. He not only founded the Christian religion; He, first of all men, lived it. We must not only have a faith about Him; we must accept for ourselves the religion of Jesus, His own personal religion.

Some time in our life we probably have studied the outward facts of that wondrous life, His boyhood, youth, and manhood, His words and deeds. We have traced the progress of His ministry until it culminated in the tragedy of Calvary and the glory of the Resurrection-morning. But most of us have neglected the study of His inner life, His thoughts, motives, and ideals, His value-judgments and will-attitudes. If we would live His religion, we must cultivate His mind, His consciousness, learn to make His appraisals, accept for ourselves His conception of God, self, matter, and evil.

He put first things first. He did not deny other things, but He put them in their own place. He saw things in proportion. He recognized ultimate values and saw eternal issues. He never mistook shadows and appearances for facts and realities. He saw things as they actually are. His mind was fixed on truth, the unchanging, absolute truth. He cultivated a wise passiveness, never seeking gains for Himself, and therefore He lived without tension, either of mind or body. He was devoted to the highest. His whole

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nature, body, mind, and spirit, was unified in one absorbing passion—to live always in fellowship with His Father and to do His will.

We must then study and cultivate His mind and practice looking at God, self, and the world through His eyes. We must enter daily into "The Inner Chamber, and having shut the door" upon all thoughts of the world outside, earnestly cultivate His ability to realize God, the essential oneness of our life with the one Creative Life, the organic union of our spirit with the Universal Spirit. With the growth of this Christ-consciousness will come an enhancement of life, an invigoration of energy, an increase of vital power, that will be manifest in a new peace and serenity of mind, a new capacity for work, a new health of body, a new control over the physical, a new social consciousness, a new regality and splendour of living in and for God.

We must seek the mind of Christ. To have that mind is the secret of health and happiness as it is that of the highest character. No ideal lower than that can ever satisfy us.

We have the mind of Christ. I Cor. 2:16.

Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance: but like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living, because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy.

I Pet. 1:13-16.

LVIII

BE NOT IDOLATERS

If we worship the same God whom Jesus served, we are Christians, but if we worship any other God, we are idolaters. Let us state that truth in other terms. If we have the same appraisal of values, the same working philosophy of life that Jesus had, we are Christians, but if we have a different scale of values, or a different philosophy of life, we are idolaters. Idolatry is the service of anything lower than the highest.

Jesus did what we all do: He projected His supreme value out into the universe and called it "God," but, in His case, His judgment corresponded with Reality. The Infinite Creative Life is, in fact, characterized by that love which Jesus believed was the supreme value. God lives a life of unselfish, disinterested service, and that life we see manifest in Jesus. Then only he who accepts love, sacrificial service, as His highest value, is a true Christian. All others are idolaters, worshippers at other shrines.

How we have permitted the word "Christian" to be degraded! How we have emasculated it of its original and true meaning! We have meant by it one who has joined a Church and who can recite a creed and take part in a ceremony. But to be a "Christian" is to adopt the same scale of values that Jesus believed in, to put the same things first, and the same things second and third and last, to live by the same standards, and to be loyal to the same cause. To strive for money and material goods, health and pleasure, social position and prestige, for their own sake, is to worship idols. Jesus knew that all these things have their place and

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their value, but not the highest. He put every value in its own place!

Sometimes we complain that we do not see in our lives the definite, tangible results from our religion that we desire, but if we are really worshipping idols and not the true God, how can we expect the desired benefits? Our idols can do nothing for us!

Study the records of the life of the Nazarene and see how stupendous energy surged into and through Him, healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf. Why? Because His God embodied the highest value in this universe; because He worshipped Love! Let us firmly grasp the truth that any life with His working creed releases power! If we have a different appraisal of values, a different philosophy of life, that is, if we worship idols, Spiritual Energy cannot work in and through us. We may learn spiritual methods to the point of proficiency, but if we are idolaters at heart, if material and worldly things, or physical health and comfort, have the first place in our thought and desire, we can expect no worth-while results. We must "guard (ourselves) from idols" and worship the God whom Jesus recognized and served, "a living and true God."

For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God.

I Thess. 1:9.

My little children, guard yourselves from idols.

I John 5:21.

Wherefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

I Cor. 10:14.

LIX

GOD LIVES IN US

A false conception of personality has made it almost impossible to enter into the deep spiritual thought of Jesus and His apostles. St. John quotes Him as saying, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7). And we hear St. Paul declaring, "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). And we ask, how can two personalities abide in each other? How could Christ live in St. Paul or in us?

The trouble is that we have trained ourselves to think of a personality as being utterly impervious to other personalities, as if thick, solid walls existed to prevent any sharing of life with others. And so we have conceived that God's personality is as impenetrable as we think our own to be, and that therefore Christ and His students and disciples were employing highly coloured Oriental imagery when they used such expressions as the above, which crowd the pages of the New Testament.

This illusion of being a separate, isolated, self-sufficient, exclusive individual must be dispelled. We are distinct from each other, conscious, individuated centers of Creative Life; but we are not separate from each other nor from God whose Life we share. The more we grow in spiritual insight, the less we think of any barriers between us. In our great moments, when we stand enthralled before a glorious landscape, or when we are in the presence of one we love, the barriers between the self and the not-self seem to become less and less. The distinction remains, but it has become subordinated to the sense of oneness. As Bosanquet says, "You scarcely recognize yourself when,

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for the moment, Shakespeare or Beethoven has laid his spell on you." Nettleship expressed the same thought: "The times when one feels that one is most truly oneself are just those in which one feels that the consciousness of one's own individuality is most absolutely swallowed up, whether in sympathy with nature, or in bringing to birth the truth, or in enthusiasm for other men."

We have thought of persons as if they were solid things in space, utterly exclusive of one another. It is true that we have and shall retain personal identity; we are ourselves and always will be. We cannot believe that we shall lose that identity by being absorbed in the larger life of the Absolute. But we have so over-stressed this truth of personal identity that the New Testament is almost a closed book to us. No wonder that our religion has been so self-centered! No wonder that it has been so lacking in power!

"He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it" (Matt. 10:39). What a paradox! And yet how true to experience! To forget ourselves entirely, to abandon ourselves in unselfish service that God may live in us, to allow God to manifest Himself in and through us—this is the secret of a happy, healthful, and effective life.

And he that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he gave us.

I John 3:24.

Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.

Rom. 8:9.

THE UPWARD URGE

Life always has an upward urge. The life of an acorn, the life which the acorn is, struggles to realize itself in an oak tree. The life in a plant or a tree strains to realize itself in blossom and fruit. And life in us has its urge upward toward Christ-likeness!

"There grows in every heart, as in a shrine,
The giant image of perfection."

Hadfield expresses it: "Every organism is impelled to move towards its own completeness. Fulness of life is the goal of life; the urge to completeness is the most compelling motive of life. There is no motive in life so persistent as this hunger for fulfilment, whether for the needs of our body or for the deepest satisfaction of our souls, which compels us to be ever moving onward till we find it. Hunger, material or spiritual, is the feeling of incompleteness."

The tendency to health in our bodies, as in all organisms, is the evidence of the urge of life to completeness. Every system of healing, material, mental, and spiritual, has to depend upon the *vis medicatrix naturæ*, the inner curative tendency of the body. Life demands effective means of expression; it cannot function as it would in a sickly body.

Modern psychotherapy declares that the instincts crave expression. When an instinct is repressed, "its impulses grow stronger until they force satisfaction in direct ways (as when we give way to passion) or indirectly as a nervous disorder." So buried "complexes, if denied natural fulfilment find their expression

THE UPWARD URGE

and attain their ends or unconscious desires by producing morbid nervous and moral conditions."

No part of our personality can be repressed. If we try to live as if we had not a body, it takes its revenge upon us. Whatever our metaphysics, the body demands recognition and care. And so it is with our mental and spiritual natures. We are conscious, individualized centers of manifestation of Creative Life, and every part of our personality must be offered as the means of God's realization in and through us. As the vine needs the branches, so He needs us and has made Himself dependent upon us. Strictly speaking, we do not need self-realization; instead, the One, Infinite Life and Love needs to come to self-realization in us. If we refuse this and live as if we were ends in ourselves, we remain stunted, dwarfed, immature! We are repressed, anemic, unrealized, devitalized!

Henry Drummond knew that the life which we are has its urge upward: "The life must develop out according to its type, and, being a germ of the Christ-life, it must unfold into a Christ." Daring language that—but Christian! Infinite Life must come to its completeness, its fulfilment, its perfect expression in and through us. We can not solve the problem of our lives until we are willing to be God's instruments.

Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
Matt. 5:48.

Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus.
Phil. 3:12.

LXI

TO LIVE IS CHRIST

One can imagine an artist, a Raphael, knowing that he had only a few hours to live, saying to his beloved students, "I will not be content in saying to you that when I am gone my works will be your inspiration. What I say is this: I will be in you; my spirit will be in you; you will have more than a memory of me; you will not simply continue to be under my influence; I tell you that I, Raphael, will be in you. When you work with paint and brush, it will be I working in and through you, using your brain, your fingers, so that you can declare in truth, 'I live, yet not I, for Raphael lives in me.'"

That was the Gospel of Jesus Christ as St. Paul understood it. It seems like nonsense to one trained in the modern and western conception of personality, as something hard, impervious, impenetrable, exclusive. It was not fanciful imagery, but plain, literal fact to him. Christ, who lived in Jesus, was living in him, teaching, healing, converting in and through him. "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20).

"To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). No metaphor, but literal, actual fact! Dare we believe it? It must not be weakened into, "To me to live is to be Christ-like," nor, "To me to live is to accept Christ's teaching," nor, "To me to live is to serve Christ." It is to be taken literally, "To me to live *is Christ*."

DuBose, one of the greatest of Anglican theologians, made this profound, almost startling statement: "Christ is more than our ideal self. An ideal, merely as such, is an abstraction. He is our actual and real True Self. Apart from Him I am not I.

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Losing self and life in Him I find them. . . . Speaking exactly, (Christianity) is distinctly not a life like Christ's in us; not a life resembling His, but Himself our life. Jesus Christ certainly stands to us in the relation of example, but even more distinctly not in that of mere example, but of source and power, and of content, and matter of our life. He is our life, nothing whatever from Him, as example, or influence, or direction, or command."

God, Infinite, Perfect Love, does not desire merely to help us. He will not be content to have us work for Him. He will not be, can not be satisfied until we permit Him to live and work in and through us. All the great religious geniuses have recognized this truth. Hear St. Ignatius saying, "Let us therefore do all things as becomes those who have God dwelling in them," and Molinos crying, "Do nothing but what God does through you."

The life that we are is the Life of God in us. Fichte was right, "There is but one virtue, to forget oneself as a person; one vice, to remember oneself." And so Jesus asserted, "He that hateth his life shall keep it unto life eternal" (John 12:25).

Do we desire health or happiness, do we wish to live a life invigorated and enhanced? Then let us stop living as exclusive, impervious selves; let us forget the I and the Me and the Mine, and let God live in us, accepting as plain, literal truth, "To me to live is Christ."

Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.

II Cor. 5:17.

LXII

KNOWING THE TRUTH

We often forget that one part of the Great Commandment is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind" (Mark 12:30). We use our brains upon other things, our work and our finances, but how seldom we do any earnest and consecutive thinking about God! The result is that we are dominated by false beliefs that effectively prevent the operation of the healing and creative energies of Life. The real difficulty that confronts us is not in God that He is unwilling to heal and succour us, nor in our circumstances; it is in ourselves that we are loath to think!

We are living in a world that is a coherent whole, governed by a rational principle. All our modern sciences are built upon the belief that the world can be studied, that it is intelligible and dependable. The scientist approaches nature with an open, disinterested mind, free from all preconceptions and prejudices, and he knows that his earnestness and persistence will be rewarded with an increasing knowledge of the way the great Creative Energy works.

But somehow the idea is abroad among religious people that there is nothing to study, that "faith means believing what you know is not so." The time has now come when the Church must summon her children to be students of spiritual law. In proportion as we know the truth, and conform our lives to it, we shall lay hold of and utilize great spiritual forces for the overcoming of every obstacle and the satisfaction of every need.

If we are interested in the subject of Religion and Health, we ought to approach any system of teaching with these questions: Is it true? Does it correspond

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to the facts? Is the theory inherently reasonable, and does it work? Does it make the world intelligible? Was it conceived by a mind that was hospitable to truth and nothing but the truth, or was it fashioned by one who constructed the theory first and then threw away those facts that would not fit the theory?

The fact that healings occur does not prove the truth of the theory announced. Healings occur today under various teachings that are diametrically opposed to each other. Of course it is obvious that there must be a common factor unrecognized by these theories. No teaching that is not inherently reasonable can withstand the scrutiny of critical minds. Not even physical health is worth the price of believing or trying to believe what is essentially untrue. God is Truth, and can be worshiped only by sincere seekers after truth.

If we are lovers of the truth, then we may expect the illumination of "the Spirit of truth", of whom it was declared, "He shall guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13).

This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.

I Tim. 2:3-4.

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 1:17.

In your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge.

II Pet. 1:5.

LXIII

STUDY TO BE QUIET

All the great masters in religion have known that spiritual progress, deepening insight into eternal verities, increasing mastery over the material and the temporal, is dependent upon faithful obedience to what we can believe is a divine command: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10). It was out of a rich experience with God that Jesus urged the daily employment of "The Inner Chamber" of silence and fellowship. As Thomas á Kempis phrased it: "Shut thy door behind thee, and call unto thee Jesus thy Beloved. Stay with Him in thy cell, for thou shalt not find so great peace elsewhere . . . Thou, O Lord, hearest my voiceless tongue, and my silence speaketh unto Thee."

Listen to what some of the great religious geniuses say: "It is not easy to recognize Christ in the crowd. In order to see Him our mind needs some retirement and solitude."¹

"It is an exercise of great value to speak of God, but there is one that is worth much more, namely, to purify one's soul before God in silence."²

Father Baker, an English Benedictine in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, describes the spiritual method of Baltasar Alvarez, a Spanish Jesuit: "His prayer was now to place himself in God's presence, both inwardly and outwardly presented to him, and to rejoice with Him permanently and habitually.—Sometimes in his prayer he pondered a while on some text of scripture; sometimes he remained in cessation and silence before God, which manner of prayer he accounted a great

¹St. Augustine. ²St. Gregory of Nazianzus.

STUDY TO BE QUIET

treasure; for then his heart, his desires, his secret intentions, his knowledge, and all his powers spake, and God understood their mute language, and with one aspect could expel his defects, kindle his desires, and give him wings to mount spiritually unto Him."

In impressive, though oftentimes quaint language, the great masters urge the habitual use of "The Inner Chamber." There is nothing, no reading nor study, no conversation with others on the highest themes, no participation in public worship, that can be made a substitute for being quiet and assuming an attitude of attention to the Divine Presence.

In the silence, after we have gained some proficiency in the art of quiescence and contemplation, we gain a sense of peace and strength, a consciousness of being unified in an absorbing loyalty, an inward harmony and joy that are to us the sure sign that we have been in touch with God. Now, as Wordsworth says,

"with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony and the deep power of joy
We see into the life of things."

In the rush of modern life, both outside and within the Church, the summons comes, "Be still, and know that I am God."

Study to be quiet.

I Thess. 4:11.

For thus said the Lord Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.

Isa. 30:15.

LXIV

TRANQUILLITY AND MEDITATION

William James of Harvard in his book, *"Talks to Teachers"*, told of a visit of Hindus to his University: "More than one of them has confided to me that the sight of our faces, contracted as they are with American over-tensity of expression, made a painful impression upon him. 'I do not see', said one of them, 'how it is possible for you to live as you do without a single minute in your day given to tranquillity and meditation. It is an invariable part of our Hindu life to retire for at least half an hour daily into silence, to relax our muscles, to govern our breathing, to meditate on eternal things. Every Hindu child is trained to this from a very early age' ". James noted that the results of that training were manifest in the physical repose and the wonderful calmness of facial expression of his visitors and declared that we Americans were losing much by the want of such a discipline.

Surely this advice should come home to us today and in such a way that our Churches shall feel the necessity of training their communicants in the art of relaxation and quietness and meditation.

Our lives are the evidence of this great need. We have lived such fretful lives, worried and anxious about many things! The world has made such insistent demands upon our time and strength that the necessity now lies upon us to cultivate seriously the art of serenity and repose.

"The world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon."

TRANQUILLITY AND MEDITATION

What would Wordsworth, who penned these lines more than one hundred years ago, think of our lives today! We have been so preoccupied with material things, so absorbed in temporal concerns, that not only have we given little attention to the spiritual and the eternal, but even, "little we see in Nature that is ours!" Many of us have been too busy to see that "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth His handiwork", too busy even to stop and look when He has "made Himself an awful rose of gold" in the sunset!

But we know that there is no life too busy for a period of quiet and silence, "tranquillity and meditation", every day. In spite of all the calls upon us, in spite of all the agitation about us, we can be quiet if we will, sometime, somewhere. It may be at night under the solemn pageantry of the stars, or in the day when even some common way-side flower gives "thoughts too deep for tears". It may be among the hills or in the meadows, where, if we are attuned to spiritual things, everything appears to us "palpably infused with God", and we cry with Tennyson,

"The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills and the plains—
Are not these, O Soul, the vision of Him who reigns?"

If we are keen in our desire to live the higher life, we will find a time and a place to be alone, to be quiet, to listen to God, and to be at peace.

*The Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth
keep silence before him.* Hab. 2:20.

Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him.

Ps. 37:7.

VICTORY OVER ANXIETY AND WORRY

We suffer today from an excessive individualism. As we look out on natural objects, it seems to us as if the things which we see are distinct, independent, separate, and exclusive. A tree appears to be separate from all other trees. A flower seems to have only external and contingent relations to other flowers. What we see appears to be a vast aggregation of independent, isolated units. But a little reflection brings us back to the great truth of unity—the universe in which we live is a logical whole, a coherent, vital organism, the whole living in each part, and each part living in the whole.

The main cause of worry is self-centeredness. We think of ourselves and others as living distinct, separate, and independent lives, and of the human race as a vast aggregation of self-subsistent units. Again we need to remind ourselves of the basal truth of unity and see that as mere individuals we do not exist, but that we are indeed finite centers of Creative Activity, self-conscious foci of Cosmic Life throbbing in our thinking and willing.

We need to reverse our consciousness, and grasp the truth about ourselves. We do not exist for ourselves, for our happiness, health, or prosperity; we exist for God, who seeks to express Himself in and through us. When we achieve that reversal of thinking, the problem of worry has been solved. The secret of peace is found when we stop thinking about ourselves, our hopes and desires and ambitions, and begin to live in and for God. As long as we have personal and private desires and ambitions, just so long will we spend our days in fretting and worrying.

VICTORY OVER ANXIETY AND WORRY

Anxiety is evidence of our lack of faith in Omnipotent Love. It is proof that we have not yet adopted a Christian philosophy of life. It is a symptom of deep-rooted disease. Its cure is to be found in a drastic overhauling of all our thinking about God and ourselves. We need to go into "The Inner Chamber" and "shut the door of sense and open the inward and upward windows of the soul" and, in deep communion with God, accept the truth that we are here to help God, and, dedicating our lives, our time, our energy, our all to His service, we shall go out to see every worry and anxiety take wings and fly away.

John Wesley, God's great fellow-worker, declared, "I dare no more fret than curse and swear." To him, worry and anxiety was sin. But how may we stop it? By discarding our false working-creed; by forgetting ourselves in God and His purposes; by earnestly declaring whenever we face a situation in which we are tempted to be anxious, "Self is nothing to me. God is All in All!"

How can life mean to us that fulness of happiness and health which we need as God's co-workers in the Kingdom if we persist in being worried about what, after all, in comparison with the great and momentous issues, are but trifles? When we see this, we too will say,

"Oh the little birds sang east, and the little birds sang west,
And I smiled to think God's greatness flowed around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness His rest."

In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Phil. 4:6.

THE PEACE WHICH PASSETH UNDER-
STANDING

Peace! The very word is soothing and quieting. How we long for peace! When Dante in exile from Florence reached a monastery, the monks asked him what he wanted and he answered, "Peace." How we need that in our modern lives! We belong to a generation much troubled and distressed by worries and fears. As the world grows richer, it seems to grow more and more anxious and careworn. The use of natural forces has increased our powers and also multiplied our cares. It has increased the speed at which we live and work and has added to the dangerous complexity of the social organism of which we are a part. Men and women today seem more nervous, more high-strung, less able to bear their burdens calmly and silently and patiently. And we live in a time of turmoil. There is discord in the state, in industry, in the Churches, and oftentimes in our homes. We too, like Dante, want peace!

There exists the fundamental discord between the spiritual and the physical, the higher and the lower in our natures. We are torn between two conflicting tendencies, drawn in two opposite directions. Freedom and mastery can come only when there is unity and harmony within. That concord is possible only when the Adam in us is put and kept in its own subordinate place, and the spiritual reigns supreme in our thoughts and desires. When we make the final renunciation of the lower self and realize our oneness with Infinite Life and Love, then and only then can the indescribable peace of God be our sure possession.

Image the quiet depths of the ocean, leagues deep,

THE PEACE WHICH PASSETH UNDERSTANDING

when the surface waters are troubled with great storms. So is there in the depths of our natures the quiet of God's eternal peace. That peace may, if we let it, manifest itself in both mind and body until it permeates our entire being.

We may have serenity of soul in the midst of the difficulties of life, like the peace of a city Church with the tides of traffic and noise about it.

It was the parting bequest of Jesus. He had no earthly kingdom to leave, no money, no property, but He did leave that which all other bequests aim at producing—Peace! "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you." He showed us how to gain it. He lived consciously in God. He lived without tension and let the unruffled peace of God manifest itself in Him. We can have that same peace "which passeth all understanding."

Moreover, we may become "peace-makers." We may, with the realization of the peace of God within, breathe out an atmosphere of peace wherever we go. We may neutralize the spirit of discord and unrest so that all with whom we have converse will become conscious of the peace that has come into our lives. We may be centers of peace, oases of rest, in the midst of a distracted world.

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Phil. 4:7.

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful.

John 14:27.

THE JOY OF THE CHRISTIAN

Is the Church today, according to the measure of its opportunity, making people happy? If not, this is a serious indictment of modern Christianity. St. Paul and Silas sang within prison walls. The early Christians "did eat their meat in gladness and singleness of heart." As they spread through distant countries, a great wave of joy swept over the Roman Empire. The early Church had power because it made people happy.

And every great revival of essential Christianity has been accompanied with an outburst of joy. It is recorded that the Franciscan monks oftentimes cried out, in the midst of their solemn masses, for sheer joy. We are still singing the songs of the Wesleyan revival.

The modern Church has talent, social prestige, wealth, and vast administrative enterprises; but, like Martha, it seems anxious and troubled about many things.

It is not intellectual doubt that is keeping men from the Churches. The truth is that they question, and rightly so, a religion that does not make people happy. They see the reluctant, half-hearted, fearful, anxious, nervous people who have to be coaxed or scolded into Church-attendance, and they doubt the reality and power of such a religion.

The religion of many Church people is too superficial to have any practical results. They have been asked to believe in what Christ did for them, but no stress has been laid on what Christ does in and through them. They have studied more or less the outward circumstances of the life of the Incarnate One, but no emphasis has been placed upon His mind, His work-

THE JOY OF THE CHRISTIAN

ing philosophy of life, which every true Christian must study and accept. Their religion has demanded no time nor energy for prayer, meditation, and the understanding of spiritual law. How could it have the fine result of bringing them true Christian joy?

If we would know the joy of spiritual religion we must expunge from our minds the thought of an almighty tyrant who wants us to be miserable. The true God of Life and Love is infinitely happy Himself and desires our happiness, and health, and success. He cries to us, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." "Rejoice with Me." Jesus with His jubilant conception of God hesitated not in going to the marriage-feast at Cana. He prayed the Father that His joy might be in the disciples and that their joy might be full. He was the happiest man that ever lived and at the same time "a man of sorrows." Strange paradox! We have thought of Him as a pale, anemic, half-sick monk, and now we are called upon to believe Him strong, masculine, virile—a man of joy! And "the image," the living embodiment of a God of Life and Love and Happiness!

Happiness is not in material possessions nor in the lack of them; not in worldly circumstances nor in the change of them. It is never found by him who searches for it. Joy is the by-product of a life lived after the manner of Jesus Christ. It is a "fruit of the Spirit."

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.

John 15:11.

He rejoiced greatly . . . having believed in God.

Acts 16:34.

LXVIII

WE OUGHT TO BE HAPPY

No faithful and accurate observer of modern lives would declare that this is the age of happiness. Too long have men been steeped in materialism to find the joy of life. Few today would join with Browning's David in declaring:

"How good is man's life, the mere living! How fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses for ever in joy."

This is a grave arraignment of our times. No true, enduring work can be done without joy. "Delight is the soul of art." As long as men do their work mechanically, drearily, with the spirit of a slave, with no sense of vocation, with only money and what money can buy as the motive and goal of their labors, no fine and satisfying work can be done.

Nor can there be perfect health without joy. The body was made for a happy mind. "A cheerful heart is a good medicine; but a broken spirit drieth up the bones" (Prov. 17: 22).

Fear, anxiety, the sense of guilt, hatred, anger, all depressing emotions, have measurable physical effects. Everything which tends to destroy the happiness of the mind is detrimental to the health of the body.

We ought, then, to live a life of joy, for our own sakes. Think who we are as sharers of the Infinite Life of God, masters of all untoward events, victors over all evil, possessors of unexplored, unexploited mines of peace and happiness richer than the mines of Kimberley! We owe it to ourselves, men and women who would be efficient co-workers with God, to live happy lives.

Moreover, we ought to live lives of joy for the sake

WE OUGHT TO BE HAPPY

of others. Robert Louis Stevenson voiced a truth in saying, "There is an idea abroad among moral people that they should make their neighbors good. One person I have to make good—myself. But my duty to my neighbor is much more nearly expressed by saying that I ought to make him happy—if I may." It is a duty to be brave, cheerful, and serene for the sake of others, to so live that we may increase the happiness of the world.

We also owe that debt to God. When we hear Christ saying in the Garden, "Could ye not watch with me one hour?", was He not voicing the desire of the Eternal God for human sympathy? "There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." "Come, rejoice with me." We ought to be happy for the sake of God.

Joy comes to him who lives above the material and does not fear the power of evil. When we center consciousness on the lesser, low-grade reality of matter as if it had absolute worth, when we look to the material as the source of happiness and abundance, we are but chasing shadows and are doomed to disappointment. When we credit evil with a power over our lives, when we fear it or make concessions to its supposed strength, happiness takes wings and flies away. Joy comes to him who makes the spiritual and the eternal the object of all thought and desire and endeavor.

Serve the Lord with gladness. Ps. 100:2 A. V.

The joy of Jehovah is your strength. Neh. 8:10.

I know that there is nothing better for them, than to rejoice, and to do good so long as they live.

Eccles. 3:12.

LXIX

THE PRIZE OF LEARNING LOVE

“Our life, with all it yields of joy and woe
And hope and fear —believe the aged friend —
Is just our chance o’ the prize of learning love,
How love might be, hath been indeed, and is;
And that we hold thenceforth to the uttermost
Such prize, despite the envy of the world,
And having gained truth, keep truth; that is all.”

And the world agrees with Browning! Love is
“the pearl of greatest price.”

Love, unselfish, disinterested service, is the essence of what we call “heroism.” The man who can forget himself when present in the moment of another’s need, a soldier when the enemy has attacked, a sailor when his ship is sinking, is, in the world’s opinion, a “hero.” No one would wish a Carnegie medal given to the selfish.

And love is the essence of what we all call “courtesy.” Whatever the birth or culture or income or social position, a “gentleman” or “lady” is one able to forget self in the service of others. What we and everybody call “good form” is simply the expression of the spirit of human service.

Moreover, love is the essence of what we call “greatness.” Anyone, however inferior, can be selfish, but only the truly strong and masterful can love. It is the noblest characteristic of personality. We may admire to a degree the talented man and the gifted woman, but we reserve our deepest respect for those with this high capacity of self-neglect in the service of God and humanity. We are so made in the image and likeness of Perfect Love that love is our highest human value. The greatest man that this world has

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seen declared that He came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Mark 10:45). True greatness covets the opportunity to serve.

Amiel bears this testimony: "Is not making others happy the best happiness? To illuminate for an instant the depths of a deep soul . . . is to me a blessing and precious privilege. . . . We are surprised to find ourselves the possessors of a power of which we are not worthy, and we long to exercise it purely and seriously."

To be loved! That is one of the greatest privileges of life. But to love! To know some one good enough to call out all our latent capacities, great enough to absorb us; to abandon self entirely in our engrossing loyalty; to lavish our affections, our thought, our time, our all, on the one we love—this is the greatest prize life offers. When we abandon self in helpful service, we are at our best and we know it; we are at the top of our powers; we have reached the summit.

Yes, Browning was right. There are other values, but this one is supreme!

"Our life, with all it yields of joy and woe,
Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love."

Follow after love.

I Cor. 14:1.

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

I John 4:7-8.

But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

I Cor. 13:13.

THE CALL TO FEARLESSNESS

Morbid fears are protean in form, but they are all aspects of the one central fear of mankind, the fear of evil. Man has always conceived of evil as an entity or a substance or an energy or a fallen angel with almost omnipotent power, and fear of this enemy has made his blood run cold. How that fear has cursed man throughout his entire history!

We know and sympathize with people who suffer from unwholesome fears such as the fear of crowds, high places, water, fire, cats, mice, storms, disease, old age, poverty, death, and so on. If they were but convinced of the truth, that these fears are morbid and abnormal, that they have no basis in reality, such fears would lose their "torment." And, moreover, the fear of evil has no basis in reality. If we would see evil as it is, if we would strip it of its disguises, we would not be afraid of it; we would laugh it to scorn!

But that fear of evil has impinged on the racial consciousness. It was taught to us in our childhood; even the Church has oftentimes added to its terror. *And fear gives evil its power!* Remove the fear from us, and evil would shrivel up into its own size, that is, into nothingness.

What can remove this curse from us? Only daily companionship with One who knew that evil has no power until we are afraid of it. Jesus Christ was absolutely fearless, and the pith of His Gospel was and is, "Fear not; only believe" (Mark 5:36).

Experience has convinced us that fear predisposes us to that of which we are afraid; if we fear sinking in the water, we do sink; if we are afraid of insomnia, we lie awake; if the fear of evil is constant with us,

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we live a life of sin. Fearlessness is the pathway to peace, freedom, and power; if we believe in our ability to sleep, our nights are spent in restful slumber; if we have confidence in our powers of resistance, disease seldom makes inroads upon us.

Let us burn into our consciousness that we are not afraid of any evil, that no evil has any power over us unless we choose to concede it. When we banish the fear from our minds, we rob evil of all its power.

Too long have we believed that "to err is human" and that therefore we were made to sin. If the humanity of Christ was a normal and natural humanity, then we may declare, "To be holy is human." Let us rise to the challenge of that eternal truth! We are conscious, individuated centers of Creative Life, and that Life which we are, which we share with God, knows no sickness nor sin. Let us then rise to the recognition of the fact that we are now sons of God, and live a fearless life.

Centuries ago on an hillside of Judea a psalmist sang exultingly, "I will fear no evil" (Ps. 23:4). He knew the utter impotence of evil, and was not afraid of it. Since then Jesus Christ has revealed the glory of humanity living in the life of God, rejoicing in freedom from all fear of evil. To all of us, in whatever circumstances we may be, the ringing call comes, "Fear not; only believe!"

For God gave us not a spirit of fearfulness; but of power and love and discipline. II Tim. 1:7.

I, Jehovah thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Isa. 41:13.

THE VICTORY OF FAITH

It is impossible for a modern man to hold a static conception of God. In former times men were able to conceive of an Absolute God who dwelt alone, from everlasting to everlasting, a solitary, self-sufficient Being with no creative activity, with no creatures to love Him nor to respond to His love. We today cannot imagine a Deity isolated and existing apart in Epicurean felicity who finally, from no imperative or necessity of His own nature but according to the dictates of His own irresponsible will, decided to create a world which now He is equally free to annihilate, a world which exists entirely outside of His Divine Being.

It is only a dynamic conception of God that we can hold today, a faith in a God who has ever been working and is working now. Jesus did not believe in a God at rest, far apart from us in some transcendental world, but in One engaged in ceaseless activity. "My Father worketh even until now, and I work" (John 5:17). When only twelve years of age He recognized that His Father had a "business" in which He, too, must be engaged. Jesus knew that this ever-active God was working to a plan, with a great objective before Him, and He gave His time, His energy, His life, His all, to help God achieve His purposes. It was this which motivated His life on earth from the beginning to the end. A glorious Resurrection was the stamp of divine approval on a life like that.

We can and will respond when the Church calls us to faith in a dynamic God, an Eternal Activity, a Purposive Will, an Infinite Energy, working according

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to ascertainable laws. When we cease thinking of ourselves as particular, finite, unitary, exclusive selves and grasp the tremendous truth that we are conscious, individuated centers of that One, Creative Life which seeks self-realization and self-expression in and through us, we can rise to the victory of faith. Certain problems may remain; the world may seem at first sight to consist of contradictory appearances, but when we with sure confidence put entire trust in Absolute Reality revealing Itself in all the changes of finite things, then faith comes to its triumph. We know that matter is plastic to Spirit. We know that evil has no objective reality. This faith can be put to the test of every day's experiences. Believing that God lives and works in and through us, we can meet emergencies, overcome evil, and render more and more effective service in and for the Church in its task of evangelizing the nations and fully establishing the Kingdom of God on earth. It is to this victory of faith that we are summoned today.

We need to take time in "The Inner Chamber," away from the noise and discord of the world, to strengthen our faith in a dynamic God. We need to intensify our thought upon the fact that His power is our only ability, that it waits to be released to the accomplishment of great things in and through our lives. If we consecrate our personalities as willing, glad instruments of God's unwearied activity, then we may go out to daring adventures of faith. We, too, will know that faith can remove mountains!

For whatsoever is begotten of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith.

I John 5:4.

GROWTH IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

Life is never static; it is always dynamic. It is never still; it is always in motion. It is always fulfilling itself in growth. The goal of all personal life is "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). Creative Life, unresisted, will make us like Jesus Christ.

We may classify ourselves as belonging to the intellectual or the devotional or the practical type of Christians. There is great need of all three types. The intellectual type is needed to wrestle with the great problems of Reality, to think things through, to interpret the historic creeds in the terms of twentieth century thought, to make "working-creeds" that the modern man can accept and apply to all situations, to defend the faith against the assaults of philosophical materialism. The devotional type is needed to lay stress upon religion as an experience, to tell us that the secret of holiness, happiness, and health is the daily practice of the Presence of God. And the practical type is needed to remind us that there is no utility in plans that are not carried out, in brilliant conceptions that are not realized, in aspirations that are not translated into deeds.

No one of us completes all these types in himself. We are fragmentary, imperfect, incomplete. We may think that growth in the spiritual life means that we become more perfect specimens of our type. The truth, however, is that no ideal short of the perfect likeness of Jesus Christ can be satisfactory to us.

We look at that majestic figure and see Him as the ideal thinker of the world, with His mind conformed to Ultimate Truth, mirroring the mind of God as the lake

GROWTH IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

reflects the unclouded blue; as the ideal devotional man of the world, perpetually open to the Unseen, bearing the air of absolute mastery over all happenings and circumstances, yet living in entire dependence upon God; and as the ideal practical man of the world, starting movements of human helpfulness that have never spent their force nor ever will as long as there is an ache in a human heart or a tear in a human eye.

This one-sidedness, this fragmentariness, this incompleteness is not natural to us, is not the truth about us. We see the truth in Christ. When we see Him, we see what God meant us to be.

Modern psychology is more and more insisting upon the fact that we become what we give attention to. The great mystics uttered the same truth in the words, "We are what we behold." The secret of growth in the spiritual life is to keep before us, in the silence of "The Inner Chamber," the image of Christ. The ideal will tend to become real. We will become more and more like Him whose portrait we study. We will find in ourselves the latent capacities of all three Christian types, and we will develop them in poise and balance and harmony.

They go from strength to strength.

Ps. 84:7.

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

II Pet. 3:18.

Wherefore leaving the doctrine of the first principles of Christ, let us press on unto perfection.

Heb. 6:1.

LXXIII

FULNESS OF LIFE

The image of God is our inalienable possession. We are bound to God by an organic tie. The Latins held that man lost his spiritual kinship by the sin of Adam, but retained his susceptibility to divine influences. That is not our belief today. Our life is from and of the Infinite Life. However much the image may be obscured by human sinfulness, it still exists with its original endowment. Christ came into the world and revealed man to himself. "There was no need of the restoration of a broken relationship, but rather the revelation of a relationship already and always existing, indestructible in its nature, obscured but not obliterated by ignorance and sin."

We live in God, and God lives in us. When we realize that truth, we see that our one task and responsibility is deliberately to open up our whole nature to God, that the fulness of His life may flood us and make us like Jesus Christ. It is this openness to Creative Life and Love that is the secret of that masterful personality who lived and worked in Galilee. It is the secret of every strong and happy and healthful life.

In Christ we see God. "We believe that if God had become individualized in the historical situation set by Judaism in the first century of our era, He would have lived as Jesus lived." "To men of to-day Christ is the immanent Spiritual Life of God focalized in a human personality." If we could live and love like Jesus we would be perfect like God. And that is the aim and goal of the Christian life. No lower objective can satisfy us.

It is to those who have this ideal before them that Jesus said, "I came that ye may have life, and may

have it abundantly" (John 10:10). He came to vitalize us in every department of our being, to make us intensely alive in body, mind, and spirit, and he who approximates Jesus in his manner of living finds himself tingling with a sense of aliveness.

When we pray we are consciously open to the inflow of that Life which creates and energizes and redeems. True spiritual religion means an enhanced personality. God is the All-Real, and when we abandon self to home ourselves in Him, we share and experience Reality. It is that experience which is healing and invigorating both to mind and body. We are summoned to a life of utmost vitality that we may be effective partners in the creative and redeeming work of God.

In the silence of "The Inner Chamber" we do well to ponder the words of St. Peter: "His divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (II Peter 1:3). Do we feel the force of that—"all things that pertain to life and godliness"? Then why any sense of impoverishment and inability! All that rather comes from too much self-assertion and self-dependence. The consciousness of fulness of life is a direct product of a life that devotes time each day to "The Inner Chamber" of selfless absorption in the joy of a rich companionship with Infinite Personality.

*Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of
mine enemies:*

*Thou hast anointed my head with oil;
My cup runneth over.*

Ps. 23:5.

LXXIV

OUR UNPOSSESSED POSSESSIONS

Ramoth in Gilead, a little city on the eastern side of Jordan, belonging to Israel, had been captured by Benhadad of Syria. A treaty had been made and then broken. War ensued. At its conclusion, Benhadad agreed to restore all his conquests, including Ramoth, but he had not done so, and Israel was not strong enough to enforce this article of the treaty. Later, when a powerful alliance had been made with Jehoshaphat of Judah, Ahab of Israel said to his officers, "Know ye not that Ramoth-gilead is ours, and we are still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria" (1 Kings XXII:3)?

It was theirs, and yet not theirs! It was their possession, but they did not possess it!

How true that is of us today! Years ago perhaps we had a vision of what religion might mean to us, in new values, new motives, new powers. We knew that it ought to and could result in the conquest of all known sin, the uprooting of every evil habit, the health of the whole personality, the equipment for effective work in and for the Kingdom of God. But those expectations have not been realized. Ramoth, a city of wealth and plenty, is ours and yet not ours. It is our possession, but we do not possess it. It is our unpossessed possession.

Men and women outside of the Church may talk about their intellectual difficulties in accepting the Christian faith, but what really deters them is the sight of Church-members who are obviously not getting much out of their religion. They seem as unhappy, as distracted and bewildered, as unable to solve the problem of health or moral disorders as people outside

OUR UNPOSSESSED POSSESSIONS

of the Church. There is nothing appealing, winsome nor persuasive about their lives, and men ask, "Why should I be a Christian? What good will it do me? How can it help me to realize my ideals? How can it aid me to fully express myself and in such a way that I will attain that unity which is peace and happiness and health?"

Read The Acts of the Apostles and note the enormous sense of power that characterized those who were in contact with Jesus. They found something that transformed them and made them veritable "new creatures," with a new mastery over self and circumstances, a new health of mind and body, a new passion that unified them and resolved all inner conflicts. That is the experience of all those today who are able to forget themselves in God. They come into possession of treasures which make all things else seem utterly trivial and insignificant.

Ramoth is a city of holiness; there is no sin there! It is a city of happiness; there is no misery there! It is a city of health; there is no sickness there! It is ours, but alas for many of us, it is not ours! It is our possession, but not all possess it. "Know ye not that Ramoth-gilead is ours, and we are still?" Let us go up and possess it!

And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work. II Cor. 9:8.

The people that know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. Dan. 11:32.

I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me. Phil. 4:13.

LET US FACE LIFE BRAVELY

Life is not easy today. To many of us, if not to all, life is difficult and hard.

We are all paying the price of our terrible modern industrialism! In spite of all the inventions which we thought would lighten the load of existence, in spite of all the time-saving devices, in spite of all the machinery upon which we have depended for production and transportation, life has not become easy for us. We have been speeded up too much; we are the victims of our hurry and strain, our fears and worries and anxieties; we are the slaves, rather than the masters of our machinery. Oftentimes it is difficult to catch our breath and to be quiet—quiet enough to think about eternal verities and to home ourselves in God. We find ourselves at times asking the questions: "Is it all worth while, all this mad pace, all this heavy burden-bearing, all this strife for material good and personal advancement? What is it all for? Where is it leading us?"

Sometimes we may even be tempted to run from it all, to throw our burdens down, and make our flight to some fancied place of rest and content. We go to the "movies" and identify ourselves with the hero or heroine, but alas! we come out to our own selves and to our own prosaic manner of living. We have an unconscious tendency to revert to early childhood and again to be without responsibilities and again to be protected by a strong father and a loving mother. But to stay at our place of service, to carry manfully our loads, to face difficulties and perplexities and disappointments, and to do all this bravely and serenely,

LET US FACE LIFE BRAVELY

with no complaints and no reproach, this takes courage and true Christian faith and fortitude!

How can we face life bravely? How can we be true to our ideals, how can we do our duty, how can we work hard and make every day count for God and humanity? There is only one way! We must again think through our accepted philosophy of life and again see and vividly realize that God lives and works in and through us, and then cast the burden of life on Him! We need not deny that life is hard; we need only see that it is part of the eternal plan and that in and through us, the Infinite Creative Life is striving to come to His own self-realization and self-expression. We can stay at our posts only if we see that God needs us and has made Himself dependent upon us. Each morning we can go into our "Inner Chamber" and say to our "Father which seeth in secret" and knows us: "I shall no longer try to live my life; Thou art living in me. Today I accept St. Paul's statement literally: 'Christ is our life.' I shall permit nothing to make me afraid or to discourage me, for I know that it cannot withstand Thee." And facing life bravely, great shall be our "recompense."

Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.

Eph. 6:13.

*Then shalt thou walk in thy way securely,
And thy foot shall not stumble.*

Prov. 3:23.

Be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.

Eph. 6:10.

LXXVI

OUR DAILY SUPPLY

We will never be able to carry about with us the sense of an adequate supply for every need unless in "The Inner Chamber" of silence and meditation we quietly permit our minds to dwell on the fact that God has supplied all our needs.

We are conscious individuated centers of the Infinite Life-Energy--God—who is always at work in us. In the past, before we realized this truth of our being, we obstructed Him by many sins and doubts and fears and false beliefs, and we suffered in mind and body because of this lack of understanding. Now our desire is keen to be free from all that hinders God's gracious designs for the growth of our personalities and the usefulness of our lives.

With this understanding of God and ourselves, we have come to the conviction that matter in our bodies and in the material world is utterly plastic to Infinite Spirit. As centers of Creative Life, in open communication with God, we may completely dominate and control our bodies. Spirit is absolutely supreme over matter.

And we have also come to the firm belief that evil is impotent and has no power over us that we need concede. We can see the fruits of evil thinking and living on all sides, but we know that evil has no claim upon us, no right to make us its victim. We therefore refuse to give it the least attention; our minds are fixed upon Infinite Good.

As a result of our training in this faith, we have the consciousness of infinite supply for every need, spiritual and material. We know that the supply is

OUR DAILY SUPPLY

coming—*how* we do not know nor care—but, it is at hand!

As mere individual selves (if such could exist in a world instinct with One Life), we are not competent to meet our problems; we have no power of our own, not even to raise our hands nor to take a step. But “our sufficiency is from God” (II Cor. 3:5).

Let us take a moment to ponder on that magnificent word “sufficiency.” Do we realize that it means that literally every need has been supplied through the All-Power of God? It is as if a very rich man said to us, “Here is a blank check which I have signed. You fill in the amount and then go to the bank and have it cashed. I stand ready to supply all that money can buy.” So is the Infinite Energy of God now available to us for *all* necessities.

“My God shall supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19). Then why do we worry? Why this strain and tension? Why think dark thoughts and express forebodings of evil? We must banish the thought of evil, poverty, sickness, or failure, from consciousness by filling the mind with keen expectation of plenty, health, and true success.

But we must keep our motives pure. Only as God’s fellow-workers are our needs supplied. God will not minister to our selfishness or covetousness. As long as we forget self in loving service to God and His Kingdom, we can have the joyful consciousness of illimitable supply.

And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work. II Cor. 9:8.

ENTIRE COMMITMENT

Entire commitment! What an ideal for one "made in the image and likeness of God!" To live after the manner of Jesus Christ, with a mind in which there is no darkness at all, saying nothing, doing nothing that is not directed and prompted from above, with daily, hourly re-enforcements of power, wholly and completely dedicated to the service of Love!

We may live a geocentric or a heliocentric life. In the one case we are the center about which all else, including God, revolves. In the other case, we, and all else, revolve about God whose "center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere."

A non-religious man is self-centered and self-reliant. He makes his own plans and assumes that he has power in himself to carry them out.

When we first gave serious thought about God, we were probably self-centered but not so self-reliant as before. We were in a peculiar situation, confronted by unusual circumstances, and we felt our need of God—to help us bear a sorrow, or to resist a temptation, or to forgive a sin. We were thinking of ourselves, our needs, our desires, our work. God existed for us! The old traditional astronomy was dominant, and we were the center of the system. God was the means, and we were the end.

But there is another life to which He summons us, a heliocentric life, in which there is the realization that all power, all love, all wisdom, all life is in God and we are simply the means by which He works out His plans and purposes. Are we ready for that life? To be indeed the conscious, individuated centers of Creative Love, with no desires or ambitions of our own,

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with only one work to do, "our Father's business!" When we live this life, "we love ourselves for God's sake, as an offering of praise and thanksgiving made to Him, as instruments to be used by Him in the doing of His Will. And the revolution spreads all through our being. Feelings which had been instruments and vehicles of self-love and, as such, had wrought nothing but shame and corruption and wretchedness, are directed to God and become vehicles of life and love. Our desires, which had been cruel and lustful, are directed now to a goal of purity and peace; our ambition, which was a craving for personal recognition and for the satisfaction of personal vanity, is now craving for the recognition of Christ by all men and for the greater glory of His name; our old anger and impatience at obstacles to our acts of self-assertion are now hurled against the obstacles that keep God from us; the hatred that used to be felt for our rivals and our superiors is now for ourselves and the faithlessness and futility of our lives." This is living with God as the center. It is a life of entire commitment.

"How shall we rest in God? By giving ourselves wholly to Him! If you give yourself by halves you can not find full rest; there will ever be a lurking disquiet in that half which is withheld."

*I will say of Jehovah, He is my refuge and my fortress;
My God, in whom I trust.*

Ps. 91:2.

*In all thy ways acknowledge him,
And he will direct thy paths.*

Prov. 3:6.

THE NATURAL AND THE SPIRITUAL MAN

"The symbolical language—in so far as it is so—of the inner and outer man, the old and the new man, Adam and Christ, the flesh and the spirit, death and resurrection, can never be improved upon nor dispensed with in Christianity. Not only because they are the best possible symbols of facts and realities in human nature and experience, but because they are themselves more and truer than mere symbols. They are a language that is translatable, and must be translated into all languages, because they are the exact expression of all higher human life."¹

Life in us is ever urgent, craving, desirous of the fulness of life and love. In this search for satisfaction, it has two tendencies, the one downward toward animalism, the other upward toward God. We are, to use St. Paul's language, "in Adam" or we are "in Christ." It is the same life-energy that makes "the natural man" and "the spiritual man."

We are "in the flesh" when we yield to the tendency to behave like the primitive man of "uncontrolled and self-regarding instincts, unbridled self-assertion, ruthless acquisitiveness, and undisciplined indulgence of sense." We are "in the Spirit" when we recall that the deepest truth about us is that we share the life of God and yield obedience to "the heavenly vision."

The desires of "the natural man" cannot be uprooted and destroyed; they can be given a new direction. His energy cannot be repressed without harm; it can be engaged in a new work, redirected toward a new goal.

When we live the life of "the natural man," we

¹DuBose.

THE NATURAL AND THE SPIRITUAL MAN

never gain peace nor happiness; we are restless and unsatisfied. Because we are more than animal, because we are made in the Divine Likeness, there can be no complete satisfaction until we have centered all our energies and intensified our whole nature upon God.

When we live the life of "the spiritual man," we transfer the old interest and energy to new and higher objectives; we give the old vigor to new and spiritual longings and loves. We gradually become integrated about a higher center. We come under the dominance of a higher passion. We make correspondence with Reality. We would not starve nor repress the abounding life within us which is of God. We express it, we satisfy its cravings in the only way true expression and satisfaction can be found: by making contact with God and living the life of the Spirit.

Too long have men thought that religion was alien to our common human nature, that it involved an injurious self-repression, but we see that they were intent on the animal instincts and neglectful of the higher nature. Now modern psychology leads us to believe that no form of repression is so harmful as that of the spiritual life and that when a true expression of that is obtained, the instincts may be sublimated, that is, re-directed toward objectives in harmony with the demands of the rational and spiritual. It is only by living in accordance with Christian principles that we can come to a complete and healthful self-expression.

Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged.

I Cor. 2:14.

FREEDOM FROM THE FETTERS OF SENSE
AND PASSION

Matter is not evil. How difficult it is to get that error out of the racial consciousness! It was the medieval doctrine that if the body was in any sense "the temple of the Holy Ghost," it had been defiled by Satan and now was to be buffeted and beaten, its desires and appetites and passions suppressed.

We know now the danger of suppressed emotions, of unsatisfied instincts. When we realize that we are made in the image and likeness of God and that our bodies are really the temples of the Spirit, the Shekinahs of the Holy One, we see that our instincts and their accompanying emotions are God-given, not to be crushed out, but to be harnessed to fulfill the purposes of the spirit. Maeterlinck expressed what modern psychology is enforcing: "The wise man learns to purify his passions; to stifle them can never be the proof of wisdom."

The instincts are those hereditary predispositions, those indestructible and inescapable tendencies, with which we are endowed at birth, and which we have inherited from a remote animal ancestry. Each one is "charged with a specific emotional quality which supplies it with its driving force."

In the animal each instinct functions automatically. All the energy of its organism is used up naturally in these responses, but, with us, not all our instincts can find their normal outlet. Our ideals and moral codes demand the suppression of the activity of those with an anti-social tendency. Yet some outlet must be found for their energy.

An instinct is not in itself sinful. The sin consists

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in permitting its expression in the manner desired by the animals or primitive men. Sin is the abuse or perversion of the instincts. The Christian religion offers the way out in the conversion or "sublimation" of the instinctive energy. It offers an objective so big, so self-absorbing, that every instinct is satisfied. It regards them as potentially instruments of the Spirit. They are made by God and for God to be used in His service. When a man's religion is like that of his Master, it leads to a true expression of every element of his personality.

When Tholuck cried, "I have but one passion. It is He. It is He," he had found the secret of a life of freedom and power. When we are self-centered, we are doomed to a life of struggle ending in defeat. When we become God-centered, when every desire and ambition is fixed on Him from whom we came and to whom we go, we rise to the freedom which is in Christ. That life spells victory! No evil can harm or withstand us. We are panoplied with power. As we realize God within us, we rise above the surface dualisms of spirit and matter and proclaim in the name of the regal soul that we are free from all self-imposed limitations, free from all fetters of sense and passion, free from "the law of sin and death."

Jesus therefore said to those Jews that had believed him, If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

John 8:31, 32, 36.

WAS JESUS A FAILURE?

If the non-possession of wealth or of a high social or political position spells failure, then assuredly Jesus was a failure!

But what is true success, and what is real failure? The answer depends upon our accepted working-philosophy of life.

Christianity teaches that we are personal centers of the One Universal Life, and that as such we live to help God, to be the means of His self-realization and self-expression, to be the instrument of the Divine Will for the complete and permanent establishment of a Kingdom of love upon the earth. It was this life which Jesus lived so gloriously. According to this philosophy, we are successful in proportion to the degree to which we live this life and are true to the values of Jesus. All else, whether money, honors, or position, is quite incidental and trivial.

It is true that the Man of Galilee came, after a short, hard ministry, to an early and an ignominious death, but how did He regard His life and work? Did He feel like a failure? It may be that oftentimes He thought He had failed. Perhaps that thought added to His agony in Gethsemane, when He cried, "Let this cup pass from Me!" and to that on Calvary when He asked that one despairing question, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" But out of the darkness He emerged into the light, with the victorious cry, "It is finished!" He knew He had not failed.

If we interpret success in terms of a large bank account, the possession of many stocks and bonds, membership in an expensive country club, intimate acquaintance with men and women of high social posi-

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tion, many of us may, indeed, be, in the eyes of the world, failures! But if we interpret success in terms of personality rather than of possessions, of being rather than of having, of service rather than of selfishness, of happiness rather than of inner conflicts, of the quiet, assured expectation of good rather than of fear and anxiety, of the consciousness of oneness with Infinite Truth and Love rather than of a troubled life that knows no peace, then all of us may be successful!

It will take time for some to get a Christian conception of a successful life, trained in individualism and steeped in materialism as we are. The world has spoken! It says, "Jesus was a failure, and every one living a life of unselfish service to God and humanity, and not one of self-assertion and self-aggrandizement, is a failure!" Yet how often the hour comes to true souls, trying to live after the manner of Jesus Christ, when a great light is seen, a new vision bursts upon the mind, and they see and know that to be Christ-like, to be the means by which God fulfills His loving purposes to mankind, is itself success and all other life failure.

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day.

II Tim. 4:7-8.

But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of the faith, lay hold on the life eternal, whereunto thou wast called, and didst confess the good confession in the sight of many witnesses.

I Tim. 6:11-12.

BANISH EVIL FROM CONSCIOUSNESS

The new psychology warns us of the incalculable dangers of the repression of the sense of guilt. There is but one way to deal with sin in the past: face it bravely and deliberately, frankly acknowledge it before God, ask and claim forgiveness, and then, and not until then, forget it. The mind has the tendency to forget the disagreeable, the thoughts and words and deeds that we are ashamed of. The memory with its accompanying emotion may be driven underground, but it does not cease to function. The repressed complex does not become inert, but continually strives to return to consciousness, to find an outlet. It may regain entrance to consciousness under the disguise of an elaborate dream-symbolism, or by means of ungovernable impulses. It betrays its presence perhaps by nervous and mental ills traceable to this process of repression, or by the strain of interior conflict, or by producing manias and delusions, such as that of committing "the unpardonable sin." There is no obstacle to a life of freedom and power greater than that of the sense of guilt. But when that sense has been removed, by the sweet consciousness of divine forgiveness, then sin—all sin of the past or present—should be expelled from consciousness.

Evil has no power over us that we cannot resist, through the might of the indwelling Spirit. It has no power except that which we concede. We are slaves of a bad habit only so long as we think we are. As a soldier suffering from "war-neurosis" can not raise his arm until the doctor persuades him that he can, so a man remains the slave of a bad habit until some one assures him of his freedom. Virgil enunciated the

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law: "They can because they believe they can." Jesus expressed it: "According to your faith be it done unto you" (Matt. 9:29). If we continue to believe in the strength of evil, we will remain its victim. If we believe in the power of Life and Love, we will overcome the world!

"If your eyes look for nothing but evil, you will always see evil triumphant; but if you have learned to let your glance rest on sincerity, simpleness, truth, you will discover deep down in all things, the silent overpowering victory of that which you love."¹

If we would live that life of holiness and health and happiness to which God calls us, as His fellow-workers, we need to expunge evil from consciousness. We must stop thinking it. If we never think evil, we will never do evil. We must banish completely from our minds the thought of sin, poverty, disease, and death. Let us give our lives to that combat which engaged the energies of the Master—the overcoming of evil in all its forms. Let us deny with all the intensity of our natures that we are attracted to it, or that we are afraid of it. Let us live positively for the good, not negatively against the evil. Let us banish evil from consciousness!

¹Maeterlinck.

Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.

Rom. 6:11.

Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth.

Col. 3:2.

LXXXII

HUMILITY

Thomas Huxley in a letter to Charles Kingsley wrote the following words: "Science seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before the fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever end nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. . . . I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind since I have resolved at all risks to do this."

In the same vein Ruskin wrote: "I believe the first test of a truly great man is his humility. (All great men) have a curious under-sense of powerlessness, feeling that the greatness is not in them, but through them; that they could not do or be anything else than God made them; and they see something divine and God-made in every other man they meet."

According to these thinkers the greatest man is the humble, receptive, teachable man, who works in the consciousness that Another and Greater is working in and through him. The harmony of their thought with the words of Jesus is striking enough: "Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18: 4).

It is no wonder that these words have been stumbling blocks in the pathway of many who fail to grasp His meaning. He did not take some young man who in the stress of terrible temptation had kept himself pure. He did not take some old man who had worked his way through struggle and turmoil to peace and calm. It was not of them that He said, "Except ye become as

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one of these, ye cannot enter the kingdom." He said this of a humble little child!

Humility has ever been the characteristic of great spiritual men and women. The secret of their humility is in the profound conviction that the power was not in them, but, rather, acted through them. "The greater the man, the larger, that is to say, his capacity of receiving and transmitting, the clearer is his consciousness that there is vastly more in the source from which he and his fellows have been enriched. The truth and the beauty and the goodness, which they have been allowed to reveal have by no means exhausted the supply. They have only served as the channels of communication; and it has been when they have thought least of themselves that they have communicated the most. When in any unworthy sense they have exalted themselves, their ability to do great things has gradually failed."¹

We have a strong ego-instinct, and it is therefore easy to be both self-centered and self-reliant. But to assert self and to depend upon self is not a mark of strength. Any one can do that! To center consciousness on God, and to permit Him to do mighty works through us—only the strong can do that!

¹Robinson.

And he hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

II Cor. 12:9.

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.

James 4:6.

LIVE ONLY IN THE PRESENT

Fortunately, we live at a time when the science of the day does not argue against the possibility, nor even against the probability of a future life. Our faith that death will not end our conscious existence rests, however, upon theological and philosophical grounds. Nothing is more certain than that at the transition-point called "death", we shall enter upon a larger and freer life.

But there is great danger in giving much thought to the future life, and especially to idle speculations based upon a literal interpretation of the apocalyptic literature in the Bible. It is far better for us to intensify thought on how to live wisely now, on this present plane of existence. If we are living in the Spirit, content in doing the Divine Will which we know is always and ever will be rational and trustworthy, our real concern is with the present. We are spiritual beings now, and, as Wordsworth says,

"Whether we be young or old,
Our destiny, our being's heart and home,
Is with infinitude, and only there."

We now share the life of the Infinite God and we already live in Eternity. We should therefore live, not in the past nor in the future, but in the present.

Think what religion means to us now! An altogether new and different point of view! It does not mean new scenery, but, rather, changed eyes to see what has always been there. It is the discovery of what has always been true. As one says, "A converted man, as a rule, reinterprets every incident of his past life, and re-values every fact and purpose, seeking them

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in quite a new order of preference. Love for the Good, the unconditional and final Good, which religion is, like all love, finds rare values in some apparently small facts, and, on the other hand, shuts out what is a whole world for others as being of no consequence”.

It is this changed point of view that makes the present life so significant and worthful to us. We see what is ultimately real, and then in the light of this understanding, we re-appraise all the values of life. We are glad to let the Christian Religion, as Jesus lived and taught it, determine the direction of our lives, make known to us the ends that have supreme worth, and then sustain us in the pursuit of those ends. Why should the future life trouble our minds now?

Our thought must be upon today, its needs and opportunities, and we may leave tomorrow until we come to it. All of God's promises are for today. “We have a right to ask our heavenly Father for strength equal to the day, but we have no right to ask Him for one extra ounce of strength beyond it”.

“Lord, for tomorrow and its needs,
I do not pray;
But keep me, guide me, love me, Lord,
Just for today.”

Be not anxious for the morrow. Matt. 6:34.

*Delight thyself also in the Lord;
And he will give thee the desires of thy heart.*
Ps. 37:4.

*Be ye free from the love of money; content with
such things as ye have: for himself hath said, I will in
no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee.*
Heb. 13:5.

THE SUBJUGATION OF MATTER

Extreme materialism asserts that mind or spirit is either a form of matter, or a function or property of it. On the other hand, extreme idealism regards matter as an illusion, with no reality at all. To the one, matter is all! To the other, matter is nothing! Neither one is true to the facts and neither one can be demonstrated by experience. If we, in our daily lives, assume that "matter is all," we become moral failures! If we assume that "matter is nothing," we can not live at all!

If we assume that God is the Absolute Reality and that matter is an inferior reality, plastic to spirit, our experience vindicates our assumption. This conception is alone intellectually tenable, it is true to all the facts, and it is eminently practical.

What did the great Master, the supreme revealer of the character and mind of God, believe about matter? The records handed down to us tell us of how Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes that the crowds thronging Him might not suffer from hunger, and how He Himself had to eat and drink. But this Teacher of teachers declared that "man shall not live by bread alone" (Matt. 4:4). He recognized both the material and the spiritual, but to the latter He gave the preëminence. Throughout His ministry He demonstrated the supremacy of spirit and the plasticity of matter.

The Master sent out His disciples to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom and to heal the sick, that is, to destroy evil and to subjugate matter! And that has been the task of spiritual religion ever since.

What then is "spiritual healing?" It is the subjugation of matter in our bodies for the purposes of

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holiness, health, and happiness. To thus treat matter involves no "miracle" in the sense of the violation of law. God does not break the laws that He has established; He works rationally and consistently. Jesus was not a magician; He studied and obeyed the laws of the Kingdom. He lived a life of perfect health of mind and body; He assisted others to regain that health which God wills for all of us. His consciousness was dominated by the thought of God; He lived in and for God; He was a Spirit-filled man, and, therefore, God's power working in and through Him was irresistible. His "mighty works" were easy for God!

So it will be with us as we train our minds to think of matter as Jesus thought of it. It has no power of resisting God, for it is the means of His own revelation. It exists because it is the outward expression of Absolute Reality. To heal us and to keep us in health is easy for God when we coöperate with Him and permit Him to work His purposes out, in and through us. The Infinite Power which energized in Jesus waits to be released in us for the destruction of evil and the subjugation of matter.

'And they were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well; he maketh even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

Mark 7:37.

Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.

James 5:14-15.

HE CARETH FOR YOU

May we claim divine care over our lives? May we live without worry or anxiety about the past or present or future? May we confidently trust God for all good things?

Hold the thought of God as the Absolute Reality, the Infinite Life and Love "of whom are all things." All power is in Him, all wealth, all wisdom, all love. There is nothing outside the life of God. Does it not follow that He can supply all our needs out of His own immeasurable abundance? And if He Himself obeys the law of love to such a supreme degree that we may say, "God is Love," will He not supply those needs?

But bear in mind that only those who live according to the laws of the Kingdom have any right to claim divine care over their lives. If our trust is in things material, if our aim is to live according to the dictates of the world, if our ambition is to have worldly wealth and honors, if we seek self-aggrandizement in any of its forms, we may gain what we seek, but we will not secure those good and perfect gifts which are "from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning" (James 1:17). But when all the claims of the self are put aside, when we resolutely abandon all ambitions and desires for ourselves alone, when we accept selfless love as the law of our being, and dare to believe that we are made in the image and likeness of God, conscious centers of God's manifestation, when we actually live that supreme truth about ourselves, then may we, in child-like confidence, claim God's care and protection over us and those near and dear to us.

It is tragic to consider what faith we have had in

HE CARETH FOR YOU

things human and material—in science and legislation and civilization and industry and organization—and what little faith we have had in spiritual truths and forces. How different the mind of the Master! He believed that the law of love is fundamental and that failure to fulfil it is responsible for the myriad forms of human discord and misery. He taught that when men obey this rule, they come under the protection of Omnipotence, that irresistible forces are liberated in their lives. He had no confidence in Himself nor in other men as individuals, but He had supreme confidence in God in whom He and they lived.

His assurance and serenity were founded on deep conviction, not on mere opinion. He knew God in first-hand and intimate experience. He demonstrated the reality of the spiritual in overcoming sin and healing sickness. He was as sure of God as we are of the daylight that greets our eyes in the morning, and this certainty drove all fear from His mind and gave Him that peace which we so much desire today.

If we live as those who know that, living in God, there never can be separation from the fulness of Divine Life, we will have no sense of lack or insufficiency. All needs will be supplied, all desires and longings which are in accordance with the mind of Christ, in conformity to the basic law of love, will be satisfied.

Commit thy way unto Jehovah;

Trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass.

Ps. 37:5.

*What time I am afraid,
I will put my trust in thee.*

Ps. 56:3.

NOT FAILURE, BUT LOW AIM IS CRIME

A cold, drab, anemic religion will never conquer the world. The early Church swept across the Roman Empire because it was full of adventurous souls who were willing to risk all, even life itself, in their desire to witness to a dynamic religion able to save the whole personality and all society for God. Such a religion had power because it arrested attention and drew men to it by its dramatic and heroic appeal.

A man who has adopted the philosophy of life that Jesus worked out and lived may be guilty of fatuous folly in the eyes of the world, but how much of the spirit of joyful adventure is his! He looks for new situations wherein to apply Christian principles, he searches for problems that have defied other solution, and he tries to apply the inexhaustible resources of Divine Supply to all the infinite variety of human need. With every dawn he sees a new day ushered in for fresh adventure with Christ. He expects "mighty works" to occur, stupendous events, through the operation of spiritual law, the healing of the sinful and the sick, the turning of the water of life into the rich wine of human happiness and strength. He prays, "Thy will be done," but his prayer is not a "wail"—instead, it is "a shout of joyful expectation". He is ever on the tip-toe of expectancy for new and strange wonders, new exhibitions of almighty power, new revelations of eternal truth. His "Christianity is revolutionary, for to walk with Him and live by love means the turning upside down of all ordinary human conventions and human standards." He dares to adopt as his own the program of Jesus Christ for the individual and society; it be-

NOT FAILURE, BUT LOW AIM IS CRIME

comes the great cause to which he devotes all his energy, to which he relates all the activities of his daily life.

How such a man stirs our enthusiasm! His way of life is provocative and challenging! He is living after the manner of Jesus Christ, and when we stop to consider it, that way of life is infinitely attractive. We long to join him in his daring adventures, to climb with him to towering heights of fearless faith, to ignore all obstacles and obstructions, to meet all disappointments and discouragements with a smile, to dare what men call the impossible, and to study and know what they term the unknowable! What if we should fail in many enterprises! At least religion would cease to be dull and uninteresting. It would have in it the thrill of mighty adventures. At times we would know full well how Balboa felt when he ascended the heights of Panama and saw the great Pacific Ocean stretched out before him!

“Greatly begin! Though thou hast time
But for a line, be that sublime—
Not failure, but low aim is crime.”

Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Heb. 12:1-2.

MY UTMOST FOR THE HIGHEST

Washington Gladden once said: "It is better to say, 'This one thing I do,' than to say, 'These forty things I dabble in.'" But how rare is the life that has found the one thing to do, the one all-absorbing cause! We are so prone to scatter and to waste our energies, starting many enterprises and completing none, turning from one task to another without any definite achievement. We ought to give heed to Phillips Brooks as he urges, "Do not dare to live without some clear intention toward which your living shall be bent. Mean to be something with all your might. Be such a man, live such a life that, if every man were such a man as you, and every life like yours, this earth would be God's paradise."

Burne-Jones, the great English artist, adopted as his life's motto, "My utmost for the highest." We too need a cause so great that it will unify all our energies, integrate all our capacities, and inspire us with a burning zeal and enthusiasm. If only we too could envisage the glory of a life of selfless love, see a vision of effective endeavor and service, so that we could cry with Henry Martyn, "Now let me burn out for God!"

If Infinite Resources are available, the tasks we have tried to accomplish have been too small, our responsibilities have been too light, our work has been too easy. We have been content to remove ant-hills of difficulty, forgetful that our Lord declared that faith would remove mountains! We must dare to believe that through us, all working together, Infinite Creative Life can destroy all evil, subjugate all matter, and heal all disease. We have prayed so often, "Thy will be

MY UTMOST FOR THE HIGHEST

done on earth, as it is in heaven," and now we must believe that that prayer can be answered and our hopes realized.

We need only look around and see the challenge of human need and divine opportunity. We can see the sheer iniquity of many of our social customs and conventions; we can see many unsocial members of society, dominated by egotistic impulses, intent only on selfish, personal ambitions; we can see industry refusing to be humanized and Christianized; we can see many maimed, stunted, futile human lives sorely needing help; we can see people living in the sordid slums of evil thinking whose homes are on the boulevards; we can see myriad forms of human need. To meet this need, our religion must be dynamic; it must do something beside lead us to utter pious platitudes. "We must recover the unedited truth as it flames forth on the world in Christ Jesus" and actually apply His Gospel to all the forms of human need about us. Do we really believe in our philosophy of life—do we really believe that in whatever life it is fully adopted, Infinite Energies are released for the destruction of all evil? No aim short of the ideal of Jesus Christ for individuals and for society is worthy of us or can satisfy us. We must fling ourselves, all that we are and have, into the work that He has given us to do.

"Religion is dwelling in the presence of God until God's own face and features have burned into the soul, and then giving God back again to humanity."

I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do.

John 17:4.

LXXXVIII
EVERLASTING LIFE
A.

It is the Christian belief that God wills everlasting life to those made in His image and likeness. Death is only a transition stage, a step onward and upward in the progress of conscious, personal life. We may say that God wills our death but not as we know it oftentimes, painful, caused by disease, haunted by the memories of moral evil. Death, as God wills it, as a part of His design for us, has no more significance than the door that opens from the vestibule to the nave of the great cathedral, than the tunnel that leads from snowy Switzerland to sunshiny Italy. God, we may assert, wills death only from old age, the dissolution of the physical.

It is only the body that dies, for Life is deathless. It is the nature of the physical to wear out; indeed it is so fashioned that it should wear out that at last we may enter upon that higher and larger life which is the privilege of the children of the Kingdom.

Again we see that our conception of God is basal and determinative of all our other beliefs. If, as many suppose, God is seated in solitary grandeur on a distant throne, wholly complete in Himself, with His affections turned in on Himself, with no imperative to create and to be immanent in a creation, then we can conceive that He might destroy us or permit us to be destroyed as arbitrarily as He created us.

But we think of God as the indwelling Life of all that He has made, immanent in all that is, and transcendent above all, "the Beyond that is Within," who, through the necessity of His own nature, being Eternal Love, wills the life of personal beings who could love

EVERLASTING LIFE

Him and be worthy of His love. We are in the world as conscious, individuated centers of His own Creative Life, and as such, God needs us as we need Him. He has poured His own being into us that in and through us He might come to His own fullest realization and expression. Is it conceivable that if God needs us now He will cease to need us, that He will use us now and then throw us aside as worthless when the body is worn out? If He, the Lord of all life, needs us now, will He not see that we continue to live after the body dies?

Death, in the sense of an ending of personal consciousness, is unthinkable when we look at it from God's point of view. Is God eternally transcendent but temporarily immanent? Is His nature such that now He must needs "live and move and have (His) being" in us, and that His being can be changed? Surely we need not pray that God may continue to be God. As He is and has been, so will He be eternally, flooding us with His Life, energizing us with His power, loving us with all the fulness of His perfect love.

We believe in immortality because we dare to believe that God needs us now and that He will need us eternally.

"We tread the wilderness today,
The Promised Land tomorrow."

Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. I John 3:2.

LXXXIX
EVERLASTING LIFE
B.

Looking at it from our own point of view, we must believe in life everlasting. A rational, intelligible, dependable, and good God will not permit death to end all.

Life is made to grow, and no one knows the limits of such growth. We are personalities in the making with the objective to be "perfect even as (our) Father in heaven is perfect." Can this life, with its comparatively trivial achievements in character-building, be all? Is it not rather continued in a world that knows no sin, when it may be completed after the likeness of Him who created it? Would it be rational and good to bring such a being into existence and not grant him the opportunity to grow to the limit of his utmost possibility?

We are so made that love is the very law of our being. We never have peace of mind nor health of body unless we love. And yet only One has lived who loved to the fullest capacity of His nature. Always is there the conviction that we do not love to the uttermost, that we are capable of a stronger and richer love. When we seem to be entering upon a stage of almost perfect love, some separation occurs or what we call death intervenes, and love is unsatisfied. Surely God has designed that personal consciousness will persist after the incident of death and we will meet those whom we have imperfectly loved, and there love and be loved to the uttermost.

We now know only "in part," only segments of truth, never the full circumference. But our hunger for complete knowledge is insatiable. If a space-time

EVERLASTING LIFE

world does not afford us opportunity, will not the God of Truth see that, under other conditions, we shall perfect that understanding of Truth which we have begun here?

"We are here to help God," to be His co-workers in a vast enterprise, but how inefficient has been that work! When what men call death comes, will our opportunity of working for God be ended? Rather, will it not usher in a life in which our work will go on to its completion with no tension or strain, with no sense of weariness or exhaustion, with no motive of material rewards?

When we consider who and what we are, as centers of God's life, our latent capacities for character, love, knowledge, and work, we dare declare that we have a right to live. We had no chance to choose whether we would live or not, nor what the circumstances of our life would be. Now we demand life everlasting that personality may be perfected, that love may be satisfied, that knowledge may be completed, and that our work may be finished. We will not be content if the race survives nor if values are conserved. We ourselves want to live forever, and we believe, without a shadow of a doubt, that "God, (who) is light and in (whom) there is no darkness at all," will see that we shall never be at the mercy of death.

"'Tis life, whereof our nerves are scant,
'Tis life, not death, for which we pant;
More life, and fuller that we want."

And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

I Cor. 15:49.

XC

THE FINAL VICTORY

To the Christian, the arguments for immortality are confirmed by the Resurrection of Christ from the dead. That He lived after death is one of the impregnable facts of history. And by that Risen Life He turned human longings and dreams and arguments into a certainty. What other men guessed at and speculated about, He experienced! Now we know that what seems like an ending is only a transition to him who lives and works for God after the manner of the Master.

"There is no death! What seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of life Elysian,
Whose portal we call death."

We are not able to make mental pictures of the life beyond but there are some things that may be asserted. The difference between people then will be as it is now—in quality of life, in values and ideals. They will not be eternally separated in two groups with no means of communication between them; they will be together, friends with friends, parents with their children. What would heaven be to a mother if her boy were not with her, to be loved back into a life of truth and honor! If heaven were a place of two exclusive compartments, one for saints and one for sinners, what opportunity for unselfish service would there be! We shall be together and know and love and serve each other there.

"O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest."

The glory of heaven will not be that of a King's

THE FINAL VICTORY

palace. We recall St. John's word, "We beheld His glory", the glory of self-sacrificing love. And that will be the glory of heaven!

Too long has the monkish ideal of a perfect life lingered among many people. They have thought of heaven as a place of endless Church-going. With our conception of God and Christ and human nature, we venture to believe that in heaven there will be work and music and literature and art and friendships and humor and games and fun! We expect not a tedious monotony, but a variety of activities far greater than we know here.

There is one word that expresses better than any other what the future life will mean to us—progress! As our capacities are increased, we shall go on to larger enterprises and greater achievements. We shall love with deeper and deeper satisfaction. We shall come into a clearer and clearer understanding of Reality and Truth. We shall be more and more enhanced in personality. "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him even as He is!"

And, we look forward in joyful confidence to the time when society will be perfected as men master the art of living together, when evil in all its forms, individual and corporate, will be entirely destroyed, and when Love will reign supreme!

"Hallowed be Thy name—Hallelujah!

Infinite Ideality!

Immeasurable Reality!

Infinite Personality!

Hallowed be Thy name—Hallelujah!

We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou and in Thee;

We feel we are something—*that* also has come from Thee;

We know we are nothing—but Thou wilt help us to be.

Blessed be Thy name—Hallelujah!"

APPENDIX

- I. The Working Creed of "Applied Religion."
- II. Affirmations and Denials Based on the Working Creed.
- III. A Spiritual Method.
- IV. Practical Directions.
- V. The Modern Health Movement in the Church.
- VI. "What is this Movement?"

I
**THE WORKING CREED OF "APPLIED
RELIGION"**

I
GOD

The One, Uncreated, Creative Life and Love

Personal Spirit; Immanent and Transcendent; Infinite Wisdom; Infinite Power; Omnipresent; Absolute Reality; always creating, healing, inspiring, and perfecting; having His highest manifestation in Jesus Christ, both human and divine.

II
HUMAN NATURE

We are conscious, individuated centers of that One, Universal Life which includes yet transcends our own. We are here to be co-workers in our "Father's business."

III
MATTER

Spirit is entirely supreme over matter

Matter is derivative, not causal nor originative. It exists only as the sacrament, instrument, or means of expression of God, Life, Spirit, and, as such, has a lesser and partial degree of Reality, is plastic to Spirit, and can be dominated and utilized by Spirit. It is mortal, transitory, changeable, with neither power nor intelligence of its own.

IV
EVIL

Evil is utterly impotent

Evil has no power except that which we concede, none that we cannot resist. Sin is regression, a going backward. It is resistance to Life. God is not the author of evil. Christ came to overcome evil in all its forms.

II

DAILY AFFIRMATIONS AND DENIALS

Based upon the Working Creed

I

GOD

1. I shall have explicit trust in God with no anxiety about the past, present, or future, nor about my health, income, or success in work.
2. I know that God wills my holiness, happiness, health, abundance, and success; I ask for and claim and expect them.
3. I am more and more obeying the Law of Love (selfless, disinterested service), in every situation, with every person; thinking loving thoughts of every one, speaking loving words, and doing loving deeds.
4. I know that Love is the key that unlocks the storehouse of God's Abundance. Every moment I am drawing enough from God's Plenty to satisfy every spiritual desire and meet every material need. I decline to think thoughts of failure, disease, poverty, or death.
5. Infinite Life in me, with Its upward urge, is making me like Jesus Christ in holiness, happiness, health, and efficiency in work.
6. Creative Life and Love lives in me, thinking, speaking, acting, healing the sick, and strengthening the weak.
7. By right thinking, by belief in, and obedience to, Love, I am releasing the healing energies of Life.

II

HUMAN NATURE

1. I have no ability whatsoever of my own. "All Power is of God."
2. I shall have no ambitions of my own to satisfy, no wishes to gratify.
3. I am a channel of Divine Life and Power.
4. I am God's agent and shall be about "my Father's business." I shall be His willing, happy, faithful co-worker in destroying evil, overcoming sin and suffering, and healing disease. I have no other motive in seeking health and happiness.
5. I now live in the spiritual world, and therefore I shall look at everything from the viewpoint of the spiritual.
6. I am now living in God as the branch lives in the tree, as the bay lives in the ocean; God lives in me as the tree lives in the branch, as the ocean lives in the bay.
7. I am more and more unified in Christ. "I have but one passion—It is He! It is He!"
8. I have been subject to self-imposed limitations. I now rise to the freedom of a creative spirit, who lives and moves and has his being in God.
9. I adopt Christ's appraisal of values. I am striving for His mind, His faith, His motives, His desires, and ideals.

III

MATTER

1. Matter as such is nothing to me. It is only a means to a spiritual end. I live in and for the spiritual.
2. Physical pain and pleasure are nothing to me. I shall seek neither one for its own sake.
3. The material can never be the source of happiness

- or health. I shall use the material only when I am certain that it is a necessary means to a spiritual end.
4. As made in the image and likeness of God, I shall dominate and control my body.
 5. I know that God, Infinite Life and Love, is now healing me, is giving me that health which I need as His partner in carrying out His plans and purposes. I banish the thought of sickness from consciousness.

IV EVIL

1. Like Christ, I live to overcome evil in all its forms.
2. I deny that evil has any power over me.
3. I feel no attraction to evil and have no fear of it. I expunge it from consciousness. I refuse to think evil.
4. I am not resisting nor obstructing Creative Life.

The above affirmations and denials are for the conscious mind. We should become habituated to such thoughts. We thus gain the mind of Christ.

It is also necessary to train the subconscious mind in this Christian faith. But affirmations for the subconscious should always be brief, positive, expressive of hopes and desires to be realized, without any reference to present conditions. A good model is this: "Every day, in every way, God is giving me health." Use the affirmations when fully relaxed physically and mentally. Saturate the mind with the thought of God until you can feel the all-power of His Creative Life and Love within you, and the impotence of evil to harm you, and then picture yourself as His fellow-worker, becoming more and more like Jesus Christ, in holiness, health, happiness, and efficiency. Then slowly and with no effort whatsoever use your positive affirmation.

III

A SPIRITUAL METHOD

Directions

In the morning fix one or more of the sentences for the day in your mind.

Repeat them, especially the one in black type, as often as possible during the day.

At some time during the day or evening (the early morning is preferable), retire to a quiet place, where you can be alone and undisturbed. Assume the most restful and comfortable position. Relax as fully as possible. Concentrate your mind upon the nature of God, His love, His holiness, His power, and then upon your union with Him in Christ, the oneness of your life with that of the Risen and Triumphant Christ. When this is done, center your thoughts upon the sentences for the day. Absorb their full meaning.

Repeat over and over the sentence in black type upon retiring for the night and upon awakening in the morning.

Use the prayers every day.

The object is to relate the Christian religion to our everyday lives, to really live its fundamental truths, to so practice the presence of God as to make our religion both a power and a joy.

This method of continued, concentrated contemplation and prayer must be used day after day and week after week until the realization of God is made our habitual and permanent state of mind. Daily contact with God, the supreme personality and reality, the infinite source of all energy, is intensely practical, showing results in our whole personality, physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Sunday—JOY

Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice (Phil. 4:4).

The joy of the Lord is your strength (Neh. 8:10).

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control (Gal. 5:22-23).

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full (John 15:11).

Ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto (Deut. 12:7).

I know that there is nothing better for them, than to rejoice, and to do good so long as they live (Eccles. 3:12).

Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be made full (John 16:24).

Be of Good Cheer; I Have Overcome The World
(John 16:33).

Monday—LIFE

In him was life; and the life was the light of men (John 1:4).

I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly (John 10:10).

It is the spirit that giveth life (John 6:63).

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me (Gal. 2:20).

Your life is hid with Christ in God (Col. 3:3).

To Me to Live is Christ (Phil. 1:21).

Tuesday—POWER

There is no power but of God (Rom. 13:1).

He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength (Isaiah 40:29).

He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me (II Cor. 12:9).

The prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up (James 5:15).

Beloved, I pray that in all things thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth (III John 2).

I Can Do All Things in Him That Strengtheneth Me
(Phil. 4:13).

Wednesday—LIGHT

Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life (John 8:12).

This is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all (I John 1:5).

In all thy ways acknowledge him; and he will direct thy paths (Prov. 3:6).

If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him (James 1:5).

In Him We Live, and Move, and Have our Being
(Acts 17:28).

Thursday—PEACE

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and

learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Matt. 11:28-30).

Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee (Job 22:21).

Fear not their fear, neither be troubled (I Peter 3:14).

Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be affrighted at them: for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee (Deut. 31:6).

**The Peace of God, Which Passeth All Understanding,
Shall Guard Your Hearts and Your Thoughts
in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7).**

Friday—LOVE

There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love (I John 4:18).

Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us (Eph. 5:1-2).

I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38-39).

Love Never Faileth (I Cor. 13:8).

Saturday—SERVICE

I am in the midst of you as he that serveth (Luke 22:27).

The Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. . . . Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; and so shall ye be my disciples (John 15:4, 8).

They help every one his neighbor; and every one saith to his brother, Be of good courage (Isaiah 41:6).

Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good (I Cor. 10:24).

For Their Sakes I Sanctify Myself (John 17:19).

Daily Prayers

Almighty God, who art the only source of health and healing, the spirit of calm and the central peace of the universe, grant to us, Thy children, such a consciousness of Thine indwelling presence as may give us utter confidence in Thee. In all pain and weariness and anxiety may we throw ourselves upon Thy besetting care, that, knowing ourselves fenced about by Thy loving omnipotence, we may permit Thee to give us health and strength and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Father of Lights, in whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, fill our hearts with such a pure and ardent love of the Truth that our first desire and purpose may be to give it to those who have it not, and grant that by the holiness and unselfish devotion of our own lives we may make our Creed beautiful in the eyes of those who are not Christians, and may lead them to desire and accept the Faith of the Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

IV

PRACTICAL METHODS¹

Perhaps it would not be right to insist that every one should use exactly the same method, for individuals differ in age, education, and circumstances. It is, however, possible to state the method which has been found practical by many people. It is therefore commended to all for a prolonged and sincere experiment. We believe that it is founded on a true psychology and will attest itself by definite results. What then are we doing?

1. As soon as possible after arising in the morning, we read and center thought upon the four articles of the "working creed," which is so called to distinguish it from the historic creeds upon which it is based. We try to saturate our minds with the truth of these basal facts about God, self, matter, and evil. By constant repetition of the words and by steady thought upon their meaning, we try to drive the Christian faith down into the depths of our minds. All the great masters in religion have advocated the habitual use of "the morning watch", and our experience leads us to believe that it should be started by concentration on the points of the "working creed." Frequently we may employ a shortened form like this: "God is Infinite Creative Life. I am a conscious, individuated center of that One Life that is always creating, healing, inspiring, and perfecting. Spirit is supreme over matter. Evil is impotent." We let these truths lie in the mind, turning them over and over, using various words to bring out their meaning, and always asking, "What do they mean to me today? How can I apply them to my present problems and situations?" And unflinchingly we appraise our lives, our motives, and ideals, in the light of that creed.

¹Reprinted from an article published in "Applied Religion".

2. We then read over very slowly the "Affirmations and Denials based upon the Working Creed." They seem to us to express the habitual thoughts of a perfect Christian. We make the prophetic statements our own. They are declarations, not of present fact, but of future realization. It is our way of obeying the psychological "law of the imagined end." We have often prayed that we might live a life like this; now we have learned to use "the prayer of realization," that is, we claim and appropriate what we have prayed for. We recall that St. John reported that the Master said: "All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." We make, therefore, while we are saying the Affirmations, a clearly defined picture of ourselves in possession of what we have prayed for, the character, love, health, happiness, and efficiency in work, that Jesus gained through the practice of essentially the same methods. We see ourselves perfected in Christ.

3. We then take our Bibles and read according to some method that we have adopted. We strive to be faithful and earnest students of the Bible. Our "working creed" serves as a guide for our reading for we believe that it states in a modern form what the writers of the Bible were expressing in the thought-forms of ages ago. On every page, the Bible summons us to the task of destroying evil and subjugating matter; it portrays the experiences of men and women engaged in the same enterprise; it fills our minds with a sense of the majesty, the greatness, and exceeding nearness of the great immanent-transcendent God, "always creating, healing, inspiring, and perfecting."

This is also the time to read "**The Inner Chamber**". It is not simply to be read through—it is to serve as

a text-book for daily study and meditation. One subject should be taken for a day. It should be read slowly, pondered over, and its truths applied to the daily life.

This morning hour with its prayer, meditation, and study becomes a great joy to us. If a day has to be missed for some serious reason, we see the difference. We regard it as invaluable, even indispensable to any one trying to gain proficiency in the use of spiritual methods.

In the evening before retiring, we repeat the morning period, though possibly in shortened form.

4. Then when lying in bed, just before sleeping, and immediately after awakening, when the conscious mind is not fully alert and when there is "an out-cropping of the subconscious mind," we train ourselves to slowly draw Christian affirmations as we see the image of ourselves as we believe God would have us be.

5. There are also moments during the day when, withdrawing from the world of time and space, we enter into our "Inner Chamber" to be alone with God. It may be while walking on the street, or when riding in the street car; it may be a moment snatched from busy work in the office or factory or home; but every day reveals its little opportunities for quiet thought, vivid realization, and conscious fellowship with God.

6. After the morning and evening period of spiritual meditation and reading, we engage in our work for others, that is, we contemplate God while we hold some sick or otherwise needy person in mind. We intensify thought upon God, the One, Creative Life and Love always "creating, healing, inspiring, and perfecting" the person being prayed for. We see that person, not as a material or physical being, not as sick or sinful, but as a center of God's life, into whom He is pouring the ful-

ness of His being. We get a clear mental image of the person full of abounding health and vigor, with every spiritual desire fulfilled and every material need supplied. It is our belief that when we have this faith for others we are releasing the mighty energies of God to heal and bless. Results demonstrate the truth of this belief.

We know that there is a deep and fundamental spiritual law which Christ had in mind when He said, "For their sakes, I sanctify Myself." Unfortunately, Christians have too often believed that Jesus was so unique, so different from us in life and work, that He alone needed or could have such a high ideal. The truth is seen more clearly when we recognize the fact that He was both the Saviour of the world and the first Christian, "the first-born among many brethren" as St. Paul said. To be a Christian is to believe in God and to live after the manner of Jesus Christ.

The acid test of the Christian life is: "Whom have you saved from sin or sickness?" Not until we have demonstrated in the life of another the efficiency of spiritual methods can we be sure of our understanding of them.

Among the first words that should be said to one seeking the privileges of the Christian faith is, "Study to help God in the life of some sinful or sick person. Give yourself earnestly to this spiritual work, and you will find that in proportion as you become an instrument for God's creative and healing work, you too will experience God's gracious activity in your life and home and work."

This movement is training its students to demonstrate their faith in the actual moral and physical healing of others. Not until they do that do we regard them as having grasped the teaching.

V.

THE MODERN HEALTH MOVEMENT IN THE CHURCH

The movement is on! Whatever we may think of it, whether our attitude is one of sympathy or of hostility, the health movement is on in the Church and is daily gaining momentum.

That the movement is attended with great dangers, no one can question. Serious mistakes may be made that will set back the cause of spiritual religion a generation or more. It may be conducted by poorly balanced leaders ever tending to go off on tangents. One truth may be stressed at the expense of others. Fanaticisms of the worst type may be developed. Grossly exaggerated reports of healings may be given wide publicity. Suicides of those failing to gain permanent cures may occur. Others, in a similar situation, may repudiate Christianity entirely. That these dangers are real has been proved by what has occurred in various places in America, Canada, and England in recent years.

Yet, the movement is on! What will the Church do about it? Will it attend only to the dangers and, failing to discriminate, present an hostile attitude to any and all teaching on the subject? Will it endorse methods that experience in America, Canada, and England has already proved are attended with the greatest of dangers? What will be the attitude of the Church? Some policy must be adopted. It is one of the most crucial questions facing the Church in America. Has not the time come for some clearly-reasoned and deliberate judgments?

I wish to state what seems to me to be some of the characteristics of a sane, constructive movement on the subject of Religion and Health in the Church.

1. It must teach that spiritual healing is an integral element of the Gospel of Christ, and, therefore, that "the ministry of healing is an inherent part of the pastoral office of the Church," but it must not teach nor use any methods which may tend to lead people to believe that spiritual healing is the only or even the primary element in that Gospel. This truth, which has been so neglected, must not now be overstressed. It must be given its exact place in the message of Christianity to the modern era.

A sane movement emphasizing the neglected factor under consideration must never permit people to become religious in order to gain health. Our Lord said, "Seek ye first His Kingdom and His righteousness." Health is a privilege of the children of the Kingdom, but their motive in seeking it must be sound. It must not be sought for its own sake. We are prostituting spiritual religion when we seek health for any other reason than to be efficient co-workers with God in the establishment of the Kingdom. It must be taught therefore that health is only a "by-product" of a true spiritual religion.

3. The primary stress of a constructive movement must be placed on "health," and not on "healing." The word "health" means "wholeness." It covers every part of man's being, body, mind, and spirit, all of which are to be brought into harmonious relationship with each other. The whole man is to be made healthful.

But we today do not hold the idea, fortunately obsolete in all the Churches, that children will, of course, wander away in the paths of evil and the Church must later win them back, perhaps in some stirring revival; from the first we teach them to stay in the Kingdom. Religion then is primarily preventative of sin. So we must see in relation to health and sickness. The Church's first duty is to show us how we can stay well. It must not permit us to become sick and then try to save us,

perhaps in some exciting "Healing Mission." Religion is primarily preventative of sickness, not curative. Medical science has seen this truth which must now be grasped by us in the Church who believe in spiritual healing.

4. But stressing health or "wholeness," the Church must have an effective message to the sick as it has to the sinful. After all, sin and sickness are but different aspects of the same evil, and Christ came to destroy evil in all its forms. The example of Christ taking much time and energy in His short ministry to heal the sick, without any hesitation as to their sickness being either a reward or a punishment or a discipline, is enough to prove to any one believing in His divinity that God wills health for all of us. Then the Church must follow the example of Christ and develop effective ways of bringing a full Gospel to the sick.

5. The whole movement must be based upon a sound, true, practical mysticism, that is, upon the truth that we can come into conscious, intimate fellowship with God, the Eternal Spirit. The fact of an ever-present union with God can be lifted up into consciousness; we may actually know and experience God; we may have an immediate sense of the Supreme Reality. This truth must not be "tacked on" a health movement; it must be its foundation rock. If this can be done, there will be no danger of going off on tangents nor of over-emphasizing the truth of spiritual healing, nor of exalting "healers," nor of adopting any peculiar methods to teach the Gospel to the sick.

But can such a mysticism, can this primal truth of all spiritual religion, be the foundation upon which the health movement in the Church is based?

There is one fact of spiritual religion that challenges impartial investigation, namely, that communion with

God, practised in the right way, and with a right view of God, self, matter, and evil in mind, results in a marked increase of vital energy! It releases the inner curative tendencies of the body, and augments them with what we may believe is the infinite power of Almighty God. Effective prayer has the effect of a potent tonic: it vitalizes and energizes the whole personality of man. And this is what we mean by what we crudely call "spiritual healing." Here we are on solid ground that no intelligent man who has any belief in God can seriously question. No remedy of any kind, material or mental, has real curative properties; it is only life that heals. And we, as Christians, assert that that life which we are in direct union with the One, Creative Life of God, in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." We are conscious, individuated centers of Creative Life. When we grasp and live that truth, when we practise definite methods, approved not only by the long experience of the Church, but also by modern psychology, when we really "seek first His Kingdom," health, mental and physical, is one of the blessed results that is "added" unto us.

Let the Church keep true to its mission; let it avoid all weird speculations; let it eschew all sensational methods and just teach, "in season and out," this basal truth of the Christian religion; and it need have no fear of any dangers attendant upon this modern health movement.

6. With the whole movement based upon this primal truth of all spiritual religion, a right view can be maintained of what may be called the accessories of faith. Many today would stress what is called "the sacrament of unction." To them it has not only psychological but also sacramental value. It is clearly Scriptural and has behind it the authority of Apostolic times. But no one,

however high the value he places upon it, would question that it is only a means to a spiritual end. A sane, constructive health movement cannot be based upon the use of consecrated oil; that is not its primary truth. The same may be said of "a gift of healing" so much disputed and about which we know practically nothing. No movement could be based upon that! These and other means do oftentimes tend to stimulate and focalize faith; they have their place, but they are accessories and aids, in relation to the problem of mental and physical health. When undue stress is placed upon any means or instruments, the Church is courting danger.

7. A constructive movement must adopt true educational methods. Is this not a problem of what we have called "religious education"? Our Lord never permitted Himself to be called a "healer" or a "divine healer." He was a "Master," a "teacher," and with His marvelous insight into human nature and its needs, He seldom worked with a throng of sick people. The best scholars of our time tell us that the evidence shows that He persistently tried to avoid crowds and that He never used "mob-psychology" in His healing work with the sick. And always He demanded "faith." He Himself did not claim to heal anyone. Oftentimes He used the strong expression, "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

The problem of health is in no way different from the problem of holiness. The Church is to educate its children into a strong, intelligent faith that covers the whole personality. Why should Church people, who no longer depend upon exciting revivals to bring the message of salvation to the sinful, depend upon any sensational methods to bring the truth of salvation to the sick? And what is it that the sick need? Is it not a thorough re-education, a right understanding of God, self, matter,

and evil, a true appraisal of values, a mind free from sin and doubts and fears, a firm grasp upon the fact of the existence and availability of spiritual power, a keen, well-motivated desire for health and an eager, enthusiastic expectation that God's Will for health will be realized? This re-education may be a simple or a very complex process; it may be accomplished in a short or a long time; it may or may not demand a probing of the subconscious mind for buried, emotional complexes, but throughout it is a work of religious education.

It is obvious that there is one thing needed today in the Church—the systematization of the truth about God, self, matter, and evil, in a form easily comprehended and grasped, and the teaching of how this can be applied to all situations and problems. This teaching should be graded and have its place in the curriculum of every Sunday School in America. Every educational means should be used to get it into the minds of those who would be Christians and live after the manner of Jesus Christ—literature, classes, summer schools, "Teaching Missions," and private work.

When it is clearly seen by our Church leaders that spiritual healing is an essential element of the Gospel of Christ and an inherent part of the pastoral office of the Church, and that therefore only sound educational methods should be employed, the health movement will be accompanied by no special dangers to the cause of spiritual religion.

Surely the time has come when we of the Church must see that this subject of Religion and Health is a most serious one, demanding the most earnest and painstaking study. Practically every problem of philosophy and theology is involved in it. And in our work with the sick almost every question of abnormal psychology comes up. Will the Church be content with a mere

"laying on of hands" or the administration of "the rite of unction," or the exercise of a supposed "gift of healing," however valuable these aids may be? Must we not be ardent and sincere in our search for the truth, ever unwilling to accept as a fact what does not have solid evidence behind it, and, keeping our poise and balance, never be led astray by our zeal or our enthusiasm?

It is our experience that the more one engages in this work, the more conservative he becomes. Vast issues are at stake relating to the welfare of "the body of Christ," the Church, and relating to the suffering, even the life and death, of many individuals.

The Church must go forward, but it must be conservative and watch every step. The more it demands patient study, the honest weighing of evidence, and the quiet use of approved educational methods, the more will it advance the cause of spiritual religion, and the more will it safeguard the future of "spiritual healing" among the Christians of America.

8. Upon the above basis, a right alliance may be made between the Church and the medical profession. No sober minded man can dispute what **materia medica** has done for humanity, in the alleviation of suffering caused by disease and accident, and the practical eradication of certain diseases. We may well believe that this progress in medical science has been due to the certain illumination of the Spirit of God. The Church will not fail to give due credit to the medical profession for its noble work for poor, suffering humanity.

But we need not go to the other extreme and assert that the spiritual methods of Jesus are now obsolete, that the command given to the Twelve and to the Seventy to "Heal the sick" is not binding upon the modern Church, and that the Church's duty is performed when

it erects or supports hospitals where only mental and material methods are employed.

Every case of sickness is primarily a spiritual problem, and spiritual methods are to be used first, but it must be seen clearly that, oftentimes, material and mental methods are exceedingly helpful, if not necessary, to the fulfillment of God's Will to health.

There may be true co-operation when the physician and surgeon see clearly and acknowledge with gratitude that in every case God does the healing and that they, like all of us, are but the assistants of the Divine Healer, and when the advocates of spiritual healing never claim to be "healers" or assume the attitude of such, never lead the sick to postpone unduly an operation that competent medical authorities declare is necessary, never fail to demand a rigid diagnosis, and in every case of organic disease insist upon the coöperation of physician or surgeon.

Many conferences with physicians, surgeons, and psychotherapists in America and England have led us to believe that on this basis there may be worked out a method of fine and helpful co-operation between them and the believers in spiritual healing. After all, it is impossible to departmentalize our lives and say, "This is physical, and this is mental, and this is spiritual." Nor can we make rigid distinctions between healings and give credit, now to medical science and now to the spiritual worker. *All healing is spiritual, whatever method or remedy is employed. We, whatever our form of assistance, are God's helpers. How can there be strife and division among us?*

9. This movement in the Churches of America should be inter-denominational. In the beginning, each Guild of Health in England, Canada, and America was exclusively Episcopalian, and each was compelled by its

experience to assume an inter-denominational platform. What is there sectarian about the truth of spiritual religion? If we are right in the above contention that the basal truth of the health movement is that of all true spiritual religion, how can we limit it to one religious body? And why should we be so exclusive? In our Guild we have adherents of all the leading religious bodies of America. More than half of the people who have passed through our educational classes are members of Churches other than the Episcopal. Why should we shut them out? We who started the Guild have talked much about "Christian Unity." Is not this a wonderful and blessed way to practise it? In fact, this has been one of the happiest features of our work. We have discovered that Christian Unity already exists, as the last Lambeth Conference declared, and we are living that truth. That there are serious questions between the Churches that must be settled and not evaded we do not deny, but when we work for the alleviation of human suffering and pray for the healing of the sick, we forget all matters of controversy; we are "one in Christ," fellow-workers with God, sharing a common life, allured on by the same high vision, loyal to the same supreme values. And it is our ardent belief that "The American Guild of Health" will prove to be one of the most effective methods of demonstrating the necessity and the possibility of the future organic union of all Christian Churches in the world.

In the above nine points, I have stated what seem to be the characteristics of a sane, constructive health movement in the Church. It is upon them that we base the policies of "The American Guild of Health".

Yes, the movement is on! It will make for sanity or insanity; it will be helpful or harmful, constructive or destructive to the cause of spiritual religion; but the

movement cannot be stopped. The people of the Church are demanding teaching on the subject of Religion and Health. Will Church leaders see that the movement is wise and productive of only good results?

"The American Guild of Health" was organized as an inter-denominational society "to restore and re-enforce to fuller expression the ministry of healing as an inherent part of the pastoral office of the Church." It is teaching through its literature, its classes, and its "Teaching Missions," what has been commended as a sound philosophy, and a Christian theology; it is employing what it has learned from the latest developments of psychotherapy. It is inculcating the habit of daily Bible study. It is intensely spiritual in both its teaching and its work. It has met the approval of many of the best minds in America in all professions and walks in life, as a sane, constructive health movement in the Churches of America.

"WHAT IS THIS MOVEMENT?"

In many places the question is being asked, "What is this new movement initiated by the society called "The American Guild of Health"?"

It is an inter-denominational society "organized to restore, and re-enforce to fuller expression the ministry of healing as an inherent part of the pastoral office of the Church." It has no official backing of any Church organization; but it works within the Churches, and practically all its members are allied with some Christian religious body.

It is the only society in the United States, working in the Churches and dealing with the subject of religion and health, which is organized on an inter-denominational basis. It started as an Episcopalian society seven years ago, but quickly over-leaped denominational barriers. When incorporated in December, 1922, under the Laws of the State of Ohio, its membership was thrown open to all persons without any question as to their Church affiliation. On its Board of Trustees are members of several great religious bodies.

It uses the word "health" in its true sense, that of "wholeness," the making of the whole man sound and harmonious. "To treat body, mind, and spirit separately we hold to be unscientific because we think of man's being as a whole. To seek healing along one line, or by treating one part of man's being to the neglect of the other parts must be unscientific because account is not taken of all the facts. Unfortunately, until in comparatively late years, healing by 'scientific principles and methods' has been popularly understood to be restricted to the treatment of the body, and the methods employed have been material. Man has been viewed only in that

part of his being which is known as body. To us in the Guild all healing is spiritual. Physical and mental means are not thought of by us as unspiritual, nor is 'spiritual' opposed to 'mental.' All are means to the Spiritual End, viz, Health, Wholeness—that harmonious adjustment of power with man to the 'Life,' of which he is a part and an individualized expression" (Bishop Maud, President of the English Guild of Health).

It is therefore a teaching, rather than a healing movement. It seeks to develop teachers, not healers. It depends upon teaching missions and classes, rather than upon healing missions and services, as the latter are ordinarily conducted. Its task is distinctly that of "religious education." Its primary stress is upon the truth of man's nature, that he is a conscious, personal, individualized center of manifestation of the Creative Life and Love. While asserting the fact of both Divine and human personality, it teaches that we should hold continually the thought that God lives in us and that what we call the "I" is the means of expression, the instrument, by which God comes to His realization and manifestation. All its teaching is based upon the fact that there is one God, one Life, one Love, one Power operating on different levels of reality, with different materials. Nature is the Divine Life at work in matter. Man is the Divine Life at work in personality. When we permit God to live and work in and through us, we find that matter is surprisingly plastic to spirit and evil is impotent.

It is not then our task to seek health primarily, but, rather, to let God manifest Himself in and through us. We know by experience that, when we in the silence come into communion with the Father, with Absolute Reality, the transcendent-immanent God, that contact is vitalizing and invigorating to the whole personality. It

means a marked increase of vital energy. When we allow God to live in us, when we surrender mind and body to be the instruments of His purpose, our problems of health are either completely solved or we succeed in rising above them. In fact, this is true of all our problems. When we obey this fundamental law expressed by St. Paul in the words, "I live, yet no longer I, for Christ liveth in me," and also by Christ, in the words, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you," great spiritual forces come into operation, and strange and, formerly, impossible things happen.

Any movement of real and permanent worth must give us a teaching which is intellectually tenable, and morally and spiritually satisfactory. This is true of this movement about which people are daily inquiring. Its teaching is proving sane and reasonable to all who study it, and it develops sane and wholesome reactions and attitudes towards all the problems and responsibilities of life. It gives men and women a working philosophy of life which they are able to apply to all situations and human relations.

And so the movement spreads through its inherent reasonableness and its intrinsic worth. It is not an "ism;" it has no frills or fads. It summons men to a life that is strong, healthful, happy, and useful. No one who accepts its viewpoint ever asks again, "Is life worth living?" Life is found supremely worth while when God is both first and last, the goal of all ambitions, the end of all desires, the meaning of all success, the substance of all power and ability.

It is a revival of essential Christianity, and is self-propagating, as true, spiritual religion always is. It spreads as did Christianity in the early centuries throughout the Roman Empire. It caters to no wealthy

patrons. It makes nothing of social prestige ; it organizes no campaigns ; it depends upon no "modern business principles and methods." It is distinctly and wholly a spiritual movement existing to glorify God and to exalt His Son, Jesus Christ. Whoever takes time to study its principles and to apply them to personal and corporate problems becomes a missionary of the movement. He reaches another, and that man begins to propagate it. He gets some of the literature and sends it to his friends. He sends in several subscriptions to the monthly magazine, "Applied Religion", which begins to carry its strong and joyful message to his business associates. A class of fifty men and women guarantees a class of one hundred if the teacher will return. It happens again and again. A man declares, "I will never be the same man again," and his friends are in the next class or Mission. A woman gets a new meaning to her life, a new significance to her work in the home or office or school, a new health and happiness, and soon her letters tell friends in other parts of the country the glad news of what has come to her. A clergyman has a Mission in his parish, and soon requests for Missions come from his friends in various cities.

The times are ripe for a new and strong emphasis upon the eternal verities of spiritual religion. The age when men tried to feed their souls upon Dead Sea apples is over. Man is too big to be long satisfied with the material and the temporal ; the light of eternity shines in his eyes. As one who "lives and moves and has his being" in God, he is always in vital, organic union with Him. This movement means that people are discovering and realizing that fact of their being and nature. And talk it and propagate it? You might as well attempt to dam a Mississippi or a Niagara as to try to prevent a man from telling about what happens when he abandons in-

dividual plans and desires and permits God to give him health and strength and peace, when he quietly abandons evil, and the material, and the self, and homes himself in God! When men and women who have been drifting helplessly find a satisfaction to their cravings, an answer to their questions, a solving of their problems, a stabilizing of their mental and emotional life, a unification of their personalities, they cannot keep it to themselves! It becomes the imperative of their nature to extend and propagate it by every means in their power!

And so this is an answer to the repeated question, "What is this movement?"

